First Religious Instructions

FOR LITTLE ONES

WITH AN APPENDIX
INSTRUCTIONS ON
FIRST CONFESSION

REV. A. SCHAFFLER.

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Religious education

FIRST

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

FOR LITTLE ONES

The Catholic Faith Simply Explained to the Youngest Pupils, with Particular View to their Practical Moral Training.

With an Appendix:

Instructions on First Confession

BY THE
Rev. ALBERT SCHAFFLER

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First Religious Instructions for Little Ones.

GOD.

I.

God Can Make All Things That He Wills.

My dear children, when you were very small—indeed, many of you were hardly a few days old—you were taken to church to be baptized. The priest who baptized you marked you for the first time with the sign of the cross. Now, however, you have grown bigger, and you must certainly have seen already how your parents and other persons make the sign of the cross. Indeed, I believe that all, or the most of you, know how to make the sign of the cross.* Make the sign of the cross. You have said: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. But who of you can tell me the meaning of these words? Who is God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Not one of you? Well, dear children, you cannot be blamed for this. You were up to the present too young to grasp this teaching, but now you are big enough and must learn to know about God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And you would like to, wouldn't you?

My dear children, so that you may learn about God, of whom your parents have often spoken to you, the good God Himself has sent me to you. He has commanded me to tell you all about Him, which you ought to know in order that you may become good people in this world and one day go to God in heaven. But you must be attentive whenever I speak to you about the good God. Yes, you must pay attention, for that is very pleasing to God, to me, to

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* The sign of the cross can be made in two ways:
(1) Make the sign of the cross with the thumb of your right hand on the forehead and say, "In the name of the Father;" then on the mouth and say, "and of the Son;" lastly on the breast and say, "and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."
(2) Raise your right hand to the forehead and touch the same with the middle finger and say, "In the name of the Father;" then touch in the same way your breast and say, "and of the Son;" then the left shoulder, and finally the right shoulder, saying, "and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

your parents, and to all good people. Nothing gives them greater pleasure than to see you attentive. So that you may not forget during the instruction that I am speaking to you of God Himself, you must during the lesson clasp your hands together.

When we make the sign of the cross we begin with the words: In the name of the Father. My dear children, what kind of father do we speak of? Is it the father which each one of you has at home whom you can see, or is it another father? Ans.: Another father. And where is this Father? In heaven. Yes, dear children, this Father is in heaven. That is why we call Him our Heavenly Father, to distinguish Him from our earthly fathers. And observe well that the Heavenly Father is not a man, like your fathers at home, but He is God Himself; therefore we say—*the Father.* Now, you know already that you have a Father in heaven and that this Father is God Himself. Whom have you in heaven? A Father. And who is this Father? God Himself. How may we, then, call Him? God the Father. Listen, children. If at this moment all your fathers were to come here, would each one of you at once know his own father? Oh, yes! You would only have to see the face, the height, and the clothes of your father, and one after the other would cry out: that is my father; that is my father, and so on.

Dear children, as you recognize your earthly fathers by the face, or the clothes, or other qualities, so the good God, your Father in heaven, has qualities by which we can know Him. These attributes —for so these qualities are called—which God alone possesses, and which are for us a never-ending source of pleasure, I will now teach you, so pay great attention.

The first attribute which God your Father in heaven has is that *He can make all things that He wills.* I will repeat it to you several times, and you must say it after me very distinctly. He can make all things that He wills. Now tell me, N., you only, what have I told you that God can do? That He can make all things that He wills. You tell me, N., and you too, N. Now tell me, all of you together, what is the first thing that I told you about God? That He can make all things that He wills. You must not forget this any more.

Perhaps some of you can tell me of something which God has made? What do we call the beautiful blue vault over our heads? Heaven. And who made heaven? God. Yes, God made heaven.

Dear children, are we already in heaven, or what is the name of this place where we live? The earth. Now we have two objects which God has made—*heaven and earth.* Now tell me, what did you first learn about God? That He can make all things that He wills. Name something that God has made. Heaven and earth.

Here, children, look at this little picture. Here we see the heavens. Do you see the blue and these clouds? This heaven is only painted with colors. Who made this heaven? The artist. And what did he require for that? Paints. Now, which heaven is the largest and most beautiful—that which God made or the artist? The one that God made. Now listen, my dear children: be surprised and astonished at the power and wonder of God. God made heaven and earth and everything that they contain out of nothing. He did not require anything to make them. Is this not wonderful? Out of what, then, did God make heaven and earth and all things? *Out of nothing!*

Now I will tell you how it happened that God made heaven and earth and all that is within them. God only said: *It shall be, and it was.* At the word that God spoke everything was made. Is this not wonderful, dear children? If one of you should say there shall be a heaven, would there be one? Observe well, therefore, this quality, which God alone possesses: He can make all things that He wills. He made heaven and earth out of nothing. He only said it shall be, and it was. Tell me, N., what did God say when He made heaven and earth? It shall be, and it was. Now you tell me, N.—and so on.

Now, I will tell you a little story. One beautiful day in the fall the village children were returning home from school. The road led them past a garden, where the trees were full of plums, red apples and pears. All children are very fond of eating fruit. You like to eat it, too, don't you? Well, these children stood still when they reached the garden, admiring the luscious fruit on the trees. Some of them said: "Oh, isn't that a lovely garden? I wish it belonged to my father!" One of the boys cried out: "That garden belongs to my father. He planted it." He ran into the garden, and asked his father for some fruit. His father shook one of the trees and a lot of fine ripe plums fell down, which the boy picked up, and they ate them up greedily.

Now tell me, why was this boy so glad that this beautiful garden belonged to his father? Was it not because he knew that his

father would give him some of the fruit? My dear children, heaven and earth. Look at them! How beautiful they are and how much good is to be found in them. To whom does heaven and earth belong? Who made them? God. And God, to whom all things belong, is your Father, who gives you lovingly good and beautiful things. What ought you to feel towards God your Father, who has such immeasurable power that He can make all things that He wills? A real happiness. Yes, dear children, you should have real happiness in God. When you see heaven, earth, and all things beautiful and good that it contains, oh, then take pleasure in all this, for you can truly say: God, who is my Father in heaven, made this. He is almighty. He can make all things that he wills.

The one who can give the best answer to the question I am going to ask will receive a little picture. N., make the sign of the cross. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. You have said: In the name of the Father. What can you tell me about God the Father? That He can make all things that He wills. Name something that God has made. Heaven and earth. Out of what did God create heaven and earth? Out of nothing. What did God say when He created heaven and earth? It shall be, and it was. What should we have in God, who can make all things that He wills? A real happiness.

My dear children, as I cannot give each one of you a picture to-day, I will give you something else which will please you just as much—a little verse, in which what I have told you to-day about God is repeated briefly:

All the heaven and all the land
God created with one command.

Now all make the sign of the cross together. What could you tell me about God the Father? Mention something that God has made? Out of what did God create heaven and earth? What did God say when He created heaven and earth? What should we feel toward God because He can make all things that He wills? And now repeat once more the little verse.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

1. Make the sign of the cross.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

2. You have said in the name of the Father. Can you tell me something of God the Father? He can make all things that He wills.
3. What has God made? Heaven and earth.
4. Out of what did God create heaven and earth? Out of nothing.
5. What did God say when He created heaven and earth? It shall be, and it was.
6. What shall we have in God who can make all things that He wills? A real happiness.

II.

God Created the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, the Grass, Flowers, Trees, and Animals, and Man and All Things.

My dear children, I am sure you have not forgotten what I told you last time about God? Now, all together answer these questions.*

Happiness, my dear children, the very greatest happiness should be yours, because you have a Father in heaven who has such power that He can make all things that He wills. And so that you can to-day be happy about God, I will tell you something very pleasing about Him. Look here, children, a moment, at what I am showing you. What is it? A watch. Are you pleased with this watch? Oh, yes, it is beautiful. The glittering silver, the clear glass, and the tiny hands please you greatly. Yes, I guess you would be delighted if the watchmaker would make each one of you such a pretty one. Now, when you grow up and behave well this pleasure will probably be yours.

Let us contemplate the heavens. Let us see if we cannot find something there which shines much brighter than the silver of this watch. What do we call this great light in the heavens that shines so bright and warm? *The sun.* My dear children, this beautiful sun in the heavens has such a brilliant ray that we cannot look at it properly. Now, this was made by God. No man could have made it. What, then, did God create in the heavens? The sun.

When the beautiful, bright sun sets in the evening then it is night and dark. God has provided that we shall not be without any light at night. Also at night we see a beautiful, large light in the heavens, which, although it does not shine as brightly as the sun, still gives us a sweet, soft light. Who can tell me the

* All the questions from the last instruction are to be repeated.

name of this light? *The moon.* And God made the gentle moon too, dear children.

There are some nights when the moon does not shine at all, or only for a few hours. But there, again, God has provided us with other lights in the heavens when the moon does not shine. What is it that twinkles so at night in the heavens, like thousands and thousands of little lamps? *The stars.* Yes, the stars. Now, dear children, we have found already three objects in the heavens which God has made—the sun, the moon, and the stars. Now tell me, what did God create in the heavens? The sun, the moon, and the stars.* Now we will look at the earth upon which we live, and see if we cannot find there something beautiful and gladdening. My dear children, you have different dresses to wear; you have other garments, some of which you wear in winter and others for the summer-time.

Well, our good God gives the earth, so to say, two dresses. In the winter the earth is covered with snow, as if clad in a white dress. But in the spring time, when the snow melts, tell me, does the earth remain white? Does it not get a beautiful green dress? And what do we call that lovely green that covers the mountains and valleys, the gardens and fields with a green dress? *The grass.* Right. What beautiful thing has God created on the earth? The grass. Which dress do you like the best, dear children—that which has only one color or that which is made of many colors? Certainly the one made of pretty bright colors pleases you the most. Now see, dear children, God gives you this pleasure every year. What does God make to grow in the gardens and fields which gives you such lovely red, blue, white and other colors? *Flowers.* Yes, the flowers, with their beautiful colors and sweet perfume. God has made them to grow out of the earth to give us pleasure.

I once overheard several children saying: "We like apples, pears, and cherries, and all the lovely berries." Now, I think it is the same with you; or perhaps you don't like fruit? Children, where does the fruit grow? On *the trees.* Well, children, the trees which bear such good fruit, God created them too. Oh! how good God is to us, to give us so many pleasures.

Now tell me: What did God create in the heavens? The sun,

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* Now question them individually.

moon, and the stars. And what on the earth? The grass, flowers, and trees.

Now children, this is not nearly all that God has created upon the earth, nor the most beautiful and the best. There are still more beautiful and better things in the world. The grass, flowers, and the trees, they cannot move about, but must always remain in the same place. Can you mention something that can move about and run and jump? *Animals.* Oh! how many beautiful animals there are on the earth! All these animals, listen and remember, God made for us for our pleasure and for our use.

There is still something more beautiful and better than the animals, and who this is you must already know. Are we animals too? What are we, then? Men. Are we not more than the animals? Oh, surely man is the best of all creatures of God on earth. Now listen how God made the first man. After God had created heaven and earth, the sun, moon, and stars, the grass, flowers, trees, and animals, God took some moist earth and formed therefrom a beautiful human body. But the body lay on the earth quite stiff and dead. Then God breathed a soul into it, and man lived. God called him Adam, and made him lord of all the earth. What did God create in the heavens?

What did He create on the earth? Grass, flowers, trees, animals, and man. And there are, my dear children, thousands and thousands of things which God has created, but which we cannot enumerate. Therefore we say briefly, God has made *all things.*

What did God create in the heavens? The sun, moon, and stars. And what on the earth? The grass, flowers, trees, animals, man, and all things.

Now, I will tell you a little story. One evening, as it was getting dark, a mother with her two children was returning home after working in the fields. They saw on the table a lamp burning. George said, surprised: "There was no one at home. Who could have lighted the lamp?"

"Oh," said Mamie, "who else but papa? I guess he got home from the town before us."

The children looked and found him, to their great delight, in the next room. The next day parents and children raked the hay in the big field. The sun was shining bright and warm, and the children showed their gladness at it.

"Now, children," said their father, "yesterday you guessed right who had lighted the lamp in the sitting-room. Now, when you see this glorious light above there in the heavens, the beautiful sun, do you ask yourselves who lighted it? Dear children, could you answer this question? Who made this glorious light in the heavens which we call the sun?"

Then Mamie answered: "Oh, I know! God made it to shine. The smallest oil lamp cannot light itself. There must therefore be some one who gave light to the sun!"

"That is it," said George gayly. "God made all things. The sun, moon, and stars, the grass, flowers, trees, animals, man, and all things which we see around us are His work."

Then he added the following verse, which you ought to learn too:

As soon as God said, "There shall be light,"
Light came, and divided day from night.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

7. What has God created in the heavens? The sun, the moon, and the stars.
8. What has He created on the earth?
Grass, flowers, trees, animals, man, and all things.

III.

God Has Arranged Everything for the Best.

My dear children, you have all seen a walnut, and many of you, I dare say, have often eaten them. Listen to the following little story. Two boys were once passing a walnut tree, on which they saw a great many nuts hanging, but they could not get at them owing to the green outside shell which covered them. All at once they saw one lying on the ground, and they sprang eagerly forward to get it. George, who was quicker than Johnnie, got it and tasted it; but he threw it away at once, and making a wry face he cried:

"Pshaw! That is a nasty thing. Nobody could eat that."

Johnnie picked it up, looked at it closely, opened the outside green shell, and there the most beautiful nut made its appearance. He cracked it open with a stone and ate the sweet kernel with satisfaction. George was really angry to think how impetuous he had been in throwing the nut away.

Children, who of these two boys acted wisely and who foolishly?

Take care, in everything you do, not to act so impetuously and foolishly, for if you do you will have many a heart-ache and spoil many a pleasure for yourselves. Do not be frivolous and indifferent. Be attentive to everything that is taught to you, so that you may become day by day wiser and better.

I showed you last time this watch, and you were so delighted with the shining silver, the clear glass, and the tiny hands. My dear children, there are many things in this watch which you have not seen yet, but which I am sure would please you very much. Does it not shine much brighter than the outside?* And look at the little wheels, how they move as if they were alive! But what is the best of all, these little wheels turn the hands around, and so by day or night I have only to look at the watch to know what time it is. Who makes watches? The watchmaker must be a very clever man that he can make such beautiful and useful watches.

Let us look at what God has made, and you will see that He has arranged everything wonderfully. And this is the second thing which you must know about God: that He has arranged everything for the best.

Dear children, how infinitely wise must God be! We see this in all that He has made. Everything in the world has a meaning and a use; nothing is out of place. Each thing has its appointed place and everything happens at the right time. Let us observe the sun in the heavens: could it shine brighter or clearer? How will it be when the sun goes down? Night and darkness set in, so that we can hardly see anything. Oh, how gloomy it would be if it was always night! You should rejoice every morning when you get up and you see that the sun is shining.

The sun has another good quality which you, N., must name to me. When it is freezing where do you go—where the sun shines or into the shade? Now, why do you do this? What does the sun do? It warms us. Very good. The sun therefore not only shines brightly, but it warms us. Did God also arrange the sun well? Therefore you should be happy in God each time you see the sun in the heavens. And remember this, that *God has made the sun to be so bright and warm.* I will say it for you; repeat it after me. What, then, has God made the sun to do? God has made the sun to shine bright and warm.

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*Open the watch and show the inside case.

It happened to me once when I was traveling that to reach a certain place I had to walk through a forest after nightfall. The sky was covered with heavy black clouds, it began to rain, and a terrific wind storm arose. I could not see a hand before me. I should probably have had to spend the night in the forest. After a short while the storm clouds dispersed and the moon appeared, shining brightly in the heavens. Oh! how glad I was, dear children, for by the moon's rays the night got clear and I was able to continue my journey. As often as you see the moon in the heavens, which makes the night so bright, think with a grateful heart of God, who has made the *moon to shine so brightly.* What has God made the moon to do? God has made the moon to shine brightly.

In many places it is the custom at Christmas time to give the good children a Christmas tree. On it the parents fasten many little candles, and when it gets dark they light them up. Then the children are delighted with the tree all lit up. But God our Father in heaven has provided us with a still greater delight, for He has made the stars in the heavens and has arranged them so beautifully that they twinkle like a thousand lights and make the night bright. What is more beautiful than a star-lit night? And what a blessing it is for us.

If there were no stars in the heavens the earth would be covered with darkness, and how sad that would be! Now, remember that God makes the stars to shine. What has God made the stars to do? God made them to adorn the heavens.

Children, what have you said about God to-day? That He has made all things beautiful and well. What has God made the sun to do? God made the sun to shine so bright and warm. And the moon? God made the moon to shine brightly. And the stars? God made the stars to adorn the heavens.

Now listen to a story. Henry was a very lazy boy. It was to no purpose that his father urged him to get up early, telling him that "early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." His father placed his bed so that the early morning sun could shine on it. As often as the sun rose the sleepy, lazy boy mumbled: "Oh! this sun gives me no peace. I can't sleep." If he had to help his father at work during the day he complained of the heat and said: "Oh! this sun shines so hot one can't stand it any longer. If only there was no sun!"

Soon bad weather set in. The sky was continually covered with

black clouds, and there seemed no end to the rain. The harvest was bad, and everything throughout the country became very dear. Henry had to go hungry. Now he regretted his foolishness and said: "Oh! if the sun would only shine again, I am sure I should not complain." But his father said to him: "I want you to remember this, that

"Nothing happens by accident.
To all events God's hand is lent.
And what He does and what He wills
Our mind with love and wonder fills."

Yes, dear children, be glad and rejoice that God has created the sun, moon, and stars, and that He has arranged everything for the best. Every ray of the sun should fill your hearts with gratitude toward your wise Creator, who has made all things.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

9. How are all things arranged? God has arranged all things for the best.
10. What has God made the sun for?
God has made the sun to shine bright and warm.
11. What has God made the moon for?
God has made the moon to shine brightly.
12. What has God made the stars for? God has made the stars to adorn the heavens.

IV.

God Has Arranged in Beautiful Order the Grass, Flowers and Trees.

To-day, dear children, we will contemplate some of the works of God upon earth, and you will see that God has ordered all things well upon the earth. What has God created on the earth? Name something. God made the grass. What is the color of grass? A green color. Take notice that God has made the grass a beautiful green. Grass is not only beautiful, but it is also exceedingly useful. What would become of the animals if God did not let the grass grow? They would all perish of hunger. With what, then, are animals fed? How wisely has God arranged that He made the grass; otherwise there would be no food for the animals. You must remember this, then: *God made the grass so beautiful and green and gives the animals their food.* What has God arranged so beautifully about the grass? God made—(and so on). A piece of bread, especially when it is spread with jelly—you children are all very fond of?—If your mother gave you a slice

fixed in this way, and a bad boy came along, snatched it out of your hand, and trod it under foot, would this be right? Take care that you do not act in this sort of way! Now, those who tread on the rich, lovely grass spoil the animals' food which God has grown for them, and that is a wicked thing to do. Do not walk on the grass and spoil the animals' food.

Children, what is this that I am holding in my hand? A flower.* What color is this flower? Do you like it? Just see! There are so many different sorts of flowers, and each one has a different color. There are blue, red, yellow, and white flowers, and many other colors. Oh! how lovely has God arranged the flowers, for He has given to them such beautiful colors.

But flowers have another good quality. Why do we hold them to our nose? Because they smell so sweetly. And God gave them their sweet perfume as well. About the flowers you must notice: *God gave the flowers their beautiful colors and their sweet odor.* What did God arrange so beautifully about the flowers? God made—and so on.

Now, because God has made the flowers so beautiful and so fine that every one admires them and takes pleasure in them, how ungrateful should we be if we destroyed them out of malice or wickedness! Oh! never do such a thing! We may now and then pick one, to enjoy the lovely colors and the sweet odor, and to admire the wisdom of the Creator, and to cry aloud with grateful hearts:: O God, if this flower is so beautiful, how beautiful and good must Thou be!

Now, dear children, we must observe the trees, which God has created, and you will see that we shall find so many good and beautiful things about them that it will give you the greatest pleasure. In the winter the trees are quite bare, without foliage, as if they were dead, but as soon as the sun shines warm in the spring the trees begin a new life. They bear leaves and blossoms, and is it not a most wonderful sight to see all the trees in the garden in blossom? Now, remember, *God made the trees to blossom so beautifully.*

The blossoms fall after a short while, and then the fruit begins to form, which grows until it is ripe. What a happiness God provides for the children, when in the fall the trees hang full of pears, apples, plums, and other fruit, and their parents or friends give

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*If possible, show one or more flowers.

them some to eat! Tell me, do you not feel happy every year when the fall comes? Do not forget in your happiness He who provided this pleasure for you—namely, your God. *God made the trees to blossom and to bear good fruit.* What has God arranged so beautifully about the trees? God made—(and so on.)

Now I will give you a little verse about this:

The lovely blossom come and see,
Of grass, of flowers, and of tree.

Now I will tell you another little story. Little James had often begged his father to buy him a penknife. On his birthday he got a real nice knife for a present. He was delighted with it, but wherever he went he cut the chairs, tables, and other things.

One day he was walking on a road where on each side there were young trees planted. He took his knife out and began to cut the trees. Suddenly he was seized by a man who had come up behind him unseen and who took the knife away from him and led him to the police station. Here James was placed under arrest and had to go hungry, and he did not get his knife back. When he promised the judge with tears in his eyes that he would surely never hurt a tree again he was set free, and the judge told him to remember that

Many a little tree must die
On account of a mischievous little boy.

Oh, dear children, I beg of you never to hurt a tree. Think how ungrateful you would be to God, who has made the trees so beautiful, if you were to destroy them. And I tell you, if one of you were to do such a wicked thing and be caught at it, he ought to be taken to the police station, locked in a cell, and perhaps get a whipping besides. What a disgrace, what a shame this would be for you! Promise me—will you not?—never to injure a tree. God has heard your promise. If you keep it, God will certainly be pleased and let the fruit grow plentifully that tastes so good to you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

13. What has God made the grass for?
God has made the grass to look beautifully green and give food to the animals.
14. What has God made flowers for?
God has made the flowers to have beautiful colors and to smell sweetly.
15. What has God made trees for?
God has made trees to blossom and to bear fruit.

V.

God has Created Beautifully and Well the Birds, the Fish and the Animals.

Before we proceed any further, dear children, with the instruction, we will have a short repetition of what you have learnt so far about God. (Repetition of the whole.) And now, children, if you will pay attention I will tell you something more about God.

I was taking a walk once in the woods, when I saw in the distance several boys looking curiously up into a tree. I approached them without their noticing me. Then I perceived that they were listening attentively to the beautiful song of a bird.

The bird flew further away. Then one of the bigger boys said: "This bird's nest can't be far away, let us go and look for it." "Yes, let's go," they all cried. They then ran in all directions, searching in the bushes. All at once one of the boys cried out delightedly: "Come here, all of you, I've found it—five little ones! five little ones!" The boys ran in all haste, for each one wanted to see them first.

They took the greatest pleasure in the young birds, which opened their bills wide, and clamored for food. The parent bird, which shortly before had sung so sweetly, flew about anxiously, hither and thither, and you could tell by the tone of her voice that she was afraid that some harm would happen to her young. As soon as they had finished admiring the nest, the eldest boy said: "Come, let us go now. The little birds are hungry, you see, waiting for the old ones to come and feed them." They did, indeed, go away without molesting the young birds, which pleased me greatly. On the way home they talked gladly about the bird's nest, and each one had something different to say about the pleasure the little birds had given them.

My dear children, you have all seen and heard the birds sing: how do you like the birds? Has not God made them beautifully and well? You all know the canary bird? What color are its feathers? Yes, they are of a most beautiful yellow, but what pleases me better still, is that it can sing so sweetly. And God has created numberless birds, many of them having a lovely plumage, and others, again, delight us with their song. Whenever you

hear the song of a sprightly bird, think of God; *for God made the birds sing so sweetly.* What has God made the birds to do so beautifully and well? (God made, and so on.)

I was passing a brook one day, when I saw a mother with her three children sitting on the edge. Each of the children had a piece of bread in his hands, which they were eating, and from time to time they threw a crumb into the water. A number of little fishes came up, snapped at the bread, and swallowed it. At this the children were delighted. Now and again they would call out to their mother: "See, mother dear, how lively the fishes swim about!"

Now, you have certainly often seen fish swimming in the water, and were you not delighted with them? It is really a pretty sight, when a number of fish swim about and play in the water. Birds, dear children, cannot swim in the water, they would be drowned. But God has arranged the fish in such a way that they can live and swim in the water. Is this not beautiful and good? Well, remember, then, that *God made the fish to swim so lively.* What, then, did God make the fish to do so beautifully and well? (God made, and so on.) But now I must warn you of a dangerous thing. Never go too near the water! You can very easily fall in and be drowned, which has often happened. Only when your father or mother is with you, then you can look at the fish swimming about.

There are other kinds of animals in the world, which cannot fly like the birds, nor swim like the fish. These animals have also been made by God, beautiful and well. For instance, the horse cannot fly, and it cannot swim in the water for long. But when it is hitched to a wagon, or a sleigh, and driven, what does it do then? Runs very fast. And there are a number of other animals which God has arranged so beautifully and so well that we cannot thank Him sufficiently. When you see a beautiful horse, a faithful dog, a lively squirrel, or any other animal running about, and it makes you glad, of whom should you think? And why of God? *God made the animals to jump and run.*

Animals, dear children, not only give us pleasure, but God has so arranged it that they are very useful to man. Oh! how hard it would be for us if God had not created the horses, oxen, and cows! We should have been obliged to pull the wagons and the ploughs ourselves. But our good God has created animals, and they must work for us. What do the animals do for us?

But they do not work for us only. God has made them for our nourishment, and to clothe us. Milk is so healthy and good, especially for children, it tastes so sweet; which animal has God given us that we shall not want for milk? The cow. And the meat that we eat, dear children! where else do we get it but from the animals which God has created for our use? God has also created insects which give us something very nice and sweet; they live by the thousands in hives made of straw, and fly about all day from flower to flower, and who can tell me what sweet thing they collect? And what are these little things called? Now, remember, then, that God makes the animals to work for us, and to give us food.

In the winter, when snow and ice cover the ground, when the wind blows so cold, if we had no clothes we should freeze. How fatherly has God provided for our needs! This dress is made of wool, and what do we call the animal from which we get wool? And who created the sheep? And so it was with our shoes. They are made of leather, and this is made from the skins of animals. How well and useful has God made the animals! *God made the animals to work for us, and to give us food and clothing.* I will repeat this for you several times.

God, who is our Father in heaven, has, then, made the animals so beautifully and so well that they give us the greatest pleasure. And yet, dear children, there are men wicked enough to hurt and torture these animals, and even to take pleasure in it. Listen to the following story.

Charles teased and tormented the unoffending animals whenever he got a chance. If an animal gave a cry of pain and fear, or did not know what to do for anxiety, then he took a wicked pleasure in this. Often, other children had begged him not to be so cruel to the poor animals. But Charles only laughed at them. Indeed, when he grew bigger and stronger he treated other children the same. He often hit other children or made them cry.

Once upon a time he, all alone, was passing a farmer's house, and in front of the door he saw two sheep lying, with their feet tied together with bands of straw. There was no one near. He went up, and pulled the poor animals by the wool, and kicked them repeatedly with his feet. A man who was looking on unperceived, slipped out of the house, took hold of the willful boy by the hair, and shook him so roughly that he became quite dizzy. Then he

boxed his ears so soundly that his teeth shook in his head. Oh dear, oh dear, what screaming and howling! "Well," said the man, "does that hurt you? Just so it hurts the poor animals when they are teased and tormented." From that moment, Charles never hurt another animal, still less a child. And he remembered this little verse:

Never torture a beast in vain,
For it can feel like you, the pain.

Children, I beg of you, never to tease the poor, defenceless animals. You know how it hurts when anyone hits you, or hurts you in any other way. Animals feel it just as much; they have feeling, too. God who created them for our benefit is very much offended when we ill treat them. He hears the cry of the tortured animal, and sooner or later these unnatural people will be punished for it. Be kind to all animals, do not injure the worm that crawls on the ground, and then God will be always good and merciful to you. Now I want you to promise me this, and remember this saying:

All my clothes, and all my food,
Come from God, and do me good.
God it is who loves us all,
God it is who gives us all.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

16. What has God made the birds for? God made the birds to sing so sweetly.
17. What has God made the fish for? God made the fish to swim so lively.
18. What did God make the animals for? God made the animals to run and jump.
19. What else did God make the animals for, which is so well and usefully arranged? God made the animals to work for us, and to give us food and clothing.

VI.

God Has Made Man's Body Beautifull and Well.

What you have heard about God, so far, my dear children, I am sure has pleased you. Now, we have not yet admired the grandest and the best that God has created upon earth. Who of you can tell me what is the noblest and most important creature that God has created on this earth? Yes, there is not upon the earth a nobler or

more beautiful creature than man. Let us consider, and we shall find, that God has made mankind the grandest and the best.

To all men, and to each one of you, dear children, God has given a beautiful human body. This body has been so beautifully and so well arranged by God that we must admire it, and be glad, and thank God for it with our whole heart.

Children, can you see me? Can you see also what I hold in my hand? With what then do you see? With the eyes. Then you have eyes in your body; that is the first thing in our bodies which we have to consider. Would it not be better if we did not have eyes? If we had no eyes, my dear children, our countenance would be quite altered, and our body would not be so beautiful. There are, however, men who have eyes, but they cannot see. What do we call these men? Blind. My dear children, we call a blind man a poor man, and so he is. The blind cannot see the wonderful works of God, they cannot take a sure step, it is always night and dark to them. How good then is God, that He has given us two eyes in our body so that we can see everything around us. Thank Him for this, and only use your eyes to do good. You must never look at anything that is bad or naughty, but you must often look up to your good Father in heaven, and thank Him that He has given you such good and beautiful eyes. Will you promise me this, children? What, then, is the first thing that God has given us in our bodies, so good and beautiful? *Eyes to see with.*

Children, do you *see* the words which I speak to you? How then do you know that I have spoken words to you? You heard the words. With what do you hear the words which I speak to you? With your ears. That is also very nice and good of God, that He has given us ears on our body with which we can hear. Do you understand me, also, when I speak softly?* Did you all understand me? God has given you good hearing. Thank Him gratefully for this! There are men who cannot hear as well as you can, to whom one must talk very loudly, so that they can understand the words; indeed, there are some men who cannot hear at all, and these we call deaf. O, children, it is a great hardship to have ears, and not be able to hear. Therefore you must be very grateful to God. You must, in particular, listen attentively when you are spoken to about God. He has arranged your ears so wonderfully that you hear everything that is

*Say softly: children must be all very good and attentive!

said to you. But men who hold bad conversations and who, which God forbid, swear and curse, you must not listen to them, but go as far away as you can from them, that you may not become wicked too. What, then, has God created on our bodies, beautifully and well? *Ears to hear with.*

Now, children, sit quite still, and do not move!* If it was always as quiet as this, and if we never heard a word, how dreary it would be in this world. Now N. you tell me, with what do I speak? With the tongue in my mouth. Animals have a mouth and tongue, too, but can they speak? Children, think this over well. God has arranged the mouth of man so that he can speak. Be glad, then, that you have a mouth with which you can speak and thank God!

God, who has made the mouth of man so wonderfully that he can talk, expects that man will only speak of good things. A bad word should never leave your mouth. A man who could be so bad as to use his mouth to slander God and his fellow men, to scold and to calumniate them, would deserve to have his ungrateful tongue torn out. Only good conversation should come from your mouths.

Above all you ought to be glad to speak to God, that is to say, you ought to like to pray to Him. This gives God the greatest pleasure. What, then, has God done still further for our bodies? *He has given us a mouth to talk with.*

Now, children, who painted this picture? The painter. Did the painter paint it with his hands or his feet? With his hands. And who made this dress which you wear on your body? With what did the dressmaker make it? With her hands. Who made these benches and this table? With what did the carpenter make them? O what a good thing it is that man can make so many beautiful things with his hands. Children, what do we call those men who have hands but who never work with them? Lazy. Does God love that kind of men? For what purpose did God give hands to man? To work with. Yes, we received our hands from God to work with. My dear children, you are very young, but you can already do some work. Move your hands, therefore, when any one gives you some-

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* All keep perfectly quiet for a few moments.

thing to do, and never be lazy good-for-nothings. Because idleness is the root of all evil. Remember often the saying:

Do all your work with zeal and joy.
Everyone likes an industrious boy.

None of you would be so bad as to use your hands to hit other children, or to steal with. For then you would offend God. Never touch anything which does not belong to you, for those who steal go, in time, to the gallows. Now tell me, do you like it when a naughty child hits you? Keep these lines in your memory:

Do unto others as you would
They should do unto you.

What has God given us on our bodies? *Hands to work with.*

My dear children, how did you get here to-day? Did anyone carry you here? Can you all walk? What do you walk with? With your feet. How good it is, then, for us that God has given to the human body feet to walk with, and to run and jump. I once saw a man who had feet, too, but he could not walk, because he was lame. He had to be lifted and carried. He looked sad and troubled.

Thank God then for your sound feet, as often as you walk, run or jump, because He created them. What more, then, has our body which God has given us? *Feet to walk with.*

I have often seen children kick each other with their feet; is that right? You must never do anything like that, or you will be punished by God.

There are many other good and beautiful things with which the human body is provided; but we will speak of them later on. What, then, has God given to the human body so good and useful? Eyes to see with; ears to hear with; a mouth to talk with; hands to work with; and feet to walk with. Did God, then, arrange the human body well? Yes, indeed! remember this verse:

With wisdom and with careful thought
Our body into life was brought.

One reason why so many men lose the beauty and health of their bodies, which God has made so well, the following little story will explain to you:

The new Pastor of a parish paid a visit one day to his school. The

children all looked very happy, healthy, and bright. One boy, named Simon, looked very pale and sickly, the Pastor thought. On observing the boy closer he found that his hair was untidy and bristly, his clothes were torn and dirty, his hands almost black, and his face unwashed. Simon had to step forward, and then it was discovered that he was suffering from a disease called the itch, caused by his uncleanliness. He could not sit any longer near the other children, and had to have a seat all by himself. How ashamed it made him feel!

On the doctor's advice he had to be washed and bathed, and take medicine often, that tasted nasty. And then the doctor told him that he would never be healthy again unless he kept himself clean. Then Simon asked the teacher, who had so often asked him in vain to be cleanly, what he should do, to keep himself neat and clean. The teacher insisted that he should every morning wash himself carefully, comb his hair, and keep himself as clean as possible through the day, and when he was dirty, to wash himself again. In a few weeks Simon was so changed that you would hardly recognize him; he had followed the teacher's advice and was now neat, clean and healthy.

You must not only take care of your bodies as far as cleanliness is concerned, but you must guard them from danger. By climbing trees, sliding on the ice, throwing stones, and so on, many a child has lost an eye, or injured a limb, and sometimes lost life. If you value your bodies, which God has made so good and useful, you will be careful to avoid danger, so as not to have the misfortune of being a cripple for life. For

How beautiful are our limbs so fair,
But easily injured and hard to repair.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

20. What are we? We are human beings.

21. What is man composed of? Of body and soul.

22. What has God given us in our bodies, which He has arranged so beautifully and so well? Eyes to see with, ears to hear with, a mouth to speak with, hands to work with, and feet to walk with.

VII.

God has Made the Soul of Man Beautiful and Good.*

I.

My dear children! last time we admired how beautifully and well God had made the human body, and we were glad that we had eyes to see with, ears to hear with, a mouth to talk with, hands to work with, and feet to walk with. But all this, children, is only a small part of what we have received from God. For God has given us something much better than the body, and I will tell you about it to-day. A short while ago I was sent for in the night to attend a very sick person. When I reached the house, there lay a young man on the bed, pale and emaciated. He was suffering very much, and all those who were around him saw that he would soon die. I prayed with, and for him, consoled him, and encouraged him to be patient. In a few hours he died. There lay his body, lifeless. His eyes were closed, he saw no longer; he heard not the crying and the sobbing of his relations; no word came from his mouth, his hands and feet were cold and stiff, he could not move any more. My dear children! what had left his body, what had taken flight, that he lived no longer? *His soul.* Yes, the soul had left his body. Man, my dear children, has not only a body but he has also a soul. I have already told you that God breathed a soul into the human body, by which it lived. The soul, dear children, which God breathed into the human body *is created to the image and likeness of God.* Each one of you has a father whom you resemble in the face. You resemble your father. So it is with our soul. It carries the likeness of God in it, it resembles God. Oh, how beautiful and glorious must our soul be, for it looks like our Lord God; how we ought to rejoice that our heavenly Father has imprinted His likeness on our soul! Our heavenly Father Himself said this when He created the first man, and said: Let us make man to our own image and likeness! How we should thank God that He has given us such a great, such a glorious soul. We will, my dear children, so love

*As the instruction on the soul of man is difficult to understand, this instruction is divided into two parts, which, in connection with frequent repetition, will make it easier for the children to comprehend it.

our souls that never shall that Divine likeness which is portrayed in us, be dishonored by anything wicked. Our souls, my dear children, can never die, not even when they leave the body; as I have been telling you, they will live forever and ever, either in heaven or in hell. *The soul is immortal.* We cannot see our soul, dear children, for *it is a spirit.* But we know that we have a soul.

You have often noticed, children, the smoke coming out of the chimney. What is burning in the stove when smoke comes out of the chimney? A fire. We do not see the fire, but only the smoke. Is it then, certain, that where you see smoke there is a fire? Yes. indeed, where there is smoke there is also a fire. So is it, my dear children, with our soul. It lives in our body, like in a house. We see in a body, inhabited by the soul, many different things which the soul animates. When, for instance, you see a man who sees, hears, speaks, walks and works. You can then say with certainty, in this body there lives a soul. But if you see a man who neither sees, hears, speaks, walks nor works, who does not breathe: but whose body lies there stiff and dead, then you can say with certainty the soul does not live any longer in this body, it has left the body, therefore, it is dead. Although we cannot see the soul, we know that we have a soul: *we recognize it by its workings.* What, then, did God breathe into the human body? *A soul.* We cannot see the soul, because it is a spirit. How, then, do we know that a body is animated by a soul? *By its workings.*

Now, dear children, let us learn more about our soul which we can recognize by its workings, and you will see how wonderfully beautiful and good God has made the soul of man.

A poor old man on crutches came to the door of a farm house, and asked for alms. John and Nellie, the farmer's two children, who were about the same age as yourselves, sat by the door on a bench, eating bread and butter which their mother had given them. Nellie felt very sorry for the old man, who looked so miserable. She gave him instantly the piece of bread and butter which she had left. The old man was touched at this and said: God reward you, dear child. While Nellie had treated the poor man so kindly, John was looking about for a stick, on which he leaned as if it were a crutch, and hobbled up to his sister, saying, in fun, "Give a poor old man some bread and butter!" Tell me, children, which of these children behaved the best? Nellie was good, and John was naughty. If I had

told this story to an animal, for instance, to a dog, would that dog have understood which child behaved well and which behaved badly? No. If I tell an animal something about God would it understand? But, children, the animal has a body and a soul. What, then, is the matter with the animal that it knows nothing of God, and cannot tell good from bad? Dear children, the animal has no reason, that is why we say the unreasoning animal.

Note, then, well, that the first thing God has given to our souls is reason, and *by it we can know God and what good and bad is.* What, then, is the first good that God has given to our souls? Reason. And what can we do with our reason? Know God, and good and evil. Can you tell me something about God? Do you know who behaved well and who behaved badly? Nellie or John? How do you know this? And who gave reason to our soul?

O my dear children, you should be glad that you already know something about God, and that you can also see the difference between good and evil. Reason which God has given us in our souls is a glorious gift of God; always use it for good. There are children and even grown up persons, who have reason, and yet they do not know God, nor can they properly distinguish between good and evil; they are ignorant, and they are generally called stupid and silly. How is it, dear children, that so many people are silly, though God has given them the use of reason? Children, shut your eyes tight. Can you see what I hold in my hand? No. Now open your eyes! Do you see it now? What is it? A book. My dear children, you have eyes, but if you will not open them you can see nothing. So it is with people to whom God has given reason. If they do not use that reason, are not attentive, nor care to learn, so it is that they know nothing about God and the true good, and remain often as ignorant as an animal.

Now, none of you want to be ignorant? Use, therefore, your reason which God has placed in your soul! Above all, pay attention, when you are told about God, when you are taught the difference between good and evil. Now, dear children, you will be able to know about God more and more, and be better able to tell the difference between good and evil; you will grow from day to day wiser and more reasonable. And what is more charming than good and clever children?

23. What is the soul? The soul is a spirit.
24. How do we know that we have a soul? We can recognize it by its workings.
25. What has God given to the soul of man? Reason.
26. What can we do with our reason? By it we can know God, and what is good and bad.

VIII.

God has Made the Soul of Man Beautiful and Good.

(*Continued.*)

II.

My dear children, we will have a short repetition of what we learnt last time about the human soul. What lives in man's body? The soul. Who breathed the soul into man? God. Why cannot we see the soul? Because it is a spirit. How, then, do we know that a soul lives in us? By its workings. What is the first gift that God placed in our soul? Reason. What can we do with our reason? Learn to know God, and good and evil. Now, there is another gift which God has placed in the soul of man, and this, dear children, we call *free will.* Dear children, you have all been to church already. We go to church to worship God. I have noticed that many children fold their hands nicely, and pray devotedly to God, whilst others do nothing but whisper, laugh, and look around. Now, tell me, which of these children love God, and what is good, and which love what is evil? Those who pray devoutly, love God and what is good; but those who talk, laugh and look around, love what is evil. Now, children, does any one make those naughty children talk? No, they do it of their own free will. Could they not pray just like the others? Why, then, do they not do so? Because they do not wish to, they will not. See, then, all men, even the children have a free will, and with this they can *love God and what is good and evil.* Man is quite free to love God and the good or what is bad. Those who love God and all that is good, of their own free will and willingly, in these God has the greatest delight. He loves them, blesses and rewards them even in this world, and afterwards He takes them to Himself in heaven. But those who love that which is wicked, and are wicked, these,

O, my dear children, are most unhappy; God punishes them severely even in this world, and in the next world with hell fire. Children, God has given you a free will, now what ought you to do gladly with this free will? Love God, and all that is good. Would you love and do that which is wicked?

When we were talking of the human body you heard a great deal about cleanliness, that keeps our bodies healthy and well. With much greater care, my dear children, you must look after your soul, that you do nothing wrong, or commit sin. Because those who sin make their souls dirty and abominable in the sight of God. Keep it, then, always free from sin. When you are inclined to do anything wrong, when bad people try to tempt you to do what is wicked, then think of God, and never forget that He will cast the souls of the wicked into hell, from which God may deliver us. Strive with your reason to know God better and better, and all things that are good, and with your free will to love God and all things that are good. Will you promise this? So that you may not forget what I have told you about the soul of man, I will give you a little verse about it:

Your soul, my child, bears God's own image.
Keep pure it, then, and without blemish.

Yes, dear children, our soul is something so precious that we must give up everything which is dear to us sooner than stain our soul with sin, and thereby offend God. We have been given a most beautiful example of this by the seven Machabee brothers and their mother, and I will now tell you something about them.

The ungodly, wicked king Antiochus, had a mother and her seven sons brought before him, and ordered them to be whipped with cowhides to force them to be wicked, to make them break a commandment of God.

The eldest one said to the king: "We will rather die than disobey the divine laws of our faith." The king was furious, and had the tongue torn out of the one who had spoken so, his skin torn off, and hands and feet cut off. Furthermore, a gridiron was heated for him to be placed on it and roasted alive. But this man died in the greatest agony rather than let himself be forced to do a wicked act. The other brothers were put to death in the same way, and there now only remained the youngest one. The king took him aside, spoke kindly to him, and promised him riches and happiness, if he would

offend God and do a wicked act. But the boy was not to be persuaded. His mother knelt before him, and said: "You, my dear child, whom I have carried in my bosom, whom I have fed and taken care of up to this age, have mercy upon me! I beg of you, my child! Look at heaven and earth, and all that is in it. God made all this, and all men out of nothing. Do not fear the executioner, but show yourself worthy of your brothers, and die gladly."

After this the mother let her son be put to death, rather than that he should offend God, and commit sin. At last the king had the mother put to death, also. Great were the pains which this mother and her sons had to bear, my dear children, but the pains did not last long. Because they would not lend themselves to wickedness, God took their souls up into heaven, where there is no more pain, nor sorrow, only joy, happiness and blessedness. It is far better to die than to be wicked and offend God; therefore, dear children, nothing at all, *no, nothing,* not even the whole world, should turn you from doing good, and lead you to be wicked, for then your souls will not go to heaven, but to hell instead; and how awful this would be! Will you, then, keep your souls from wickedness, and strive more and more to know and love God? God grant it, my dear children! and for this grace we will pray to Him every day.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

27. What other gift has God given to our soul? Free will.
28. What can we do with our free will? We can love God and do either good or evil.

IX.

God Gives Us So Many Good Things.

Dear children, I have already told you how God created the first man, Adam. Now I will tell you how well God provided all things for Adam.

God planted a most beautiful garden. He let all sorts of trees grow out of the earth. These were most lovely to behold, and they bore the most delicious fruit. A spring of water, which produced four streams, made the garden still more beautiful and pleasant. Into this delightful garden God led Adam, that he might live in it and take care of it.

How kind and good did God prove Himself to Adam! He gave him the grandest place to live in, the most delicious fruits to eat, and the freshest and purest water to drink. My dear children, God has not only been so kind and good to our first parents, and been so fatherly to them. He is just as kind to us, and we shall hear to-day how many good things we have received from God. Tell me N. are you dead? No. What are you, then? Living. Is life a great good? Who gave you life? The first blessing, then, which we have received from God is *our life*. Without life, dear children, the whole world would be nothing, we should know nothing about God, we should not see His glorious works, we should not enjoy His good gifts. What, then, is the first good which we have received from God? Life.

To live, dear children, we require many things; for instance, if we had nothing to eat, our life would soon be at an end. One day I visited a sick man. He was living, but in bed. They brought him some food but he did not touch it, he only said that he felt miserable and had no appetite for any food. What good thing was wanting to this man? Health. Without health, children, life is sad and miserable. The poor sick persons have such a miserable life that sometimes they almost wish that they could die. Who gives us our good health? It is God who gives us our good health. There are sick people who would give thousands of dollars if anyone could give them good health, but health cannot be bought. What, then, is the second good thing that we have received from God? *Our health.*

You are all healthy, children? If you had nothing to eat and drink for a whole week, would you look as well as you do now? Hunger and thirst would torment you so that you would get sick, and at last you would die. What do we need, then, for our life and our health? *Food and drink.* And who gives us what is necessary to eat and drink? God. At the dinner hour to-day will God come and bring you something to eat?

If, my dear children, God does not bring you food and drink Himself, they are none the less His gift—they come from Him in the first place. Now, pay attention, so that you may understand how your food and drink really come from God. When you are hungry, you ask your father or mother for some bread; but, dear children, could your father or mother give you bread if there was no flour

to bake the bread with? And how would the flour be made? And who makes the grain to grow? See, dear children, therefore, that bread and all foods that are prepared with flour come from God; for God makes the grain to grow from which bread and other foods are made.

You have, of course, all eaten meat? Does the meat come from God, too? Do we not get it from the butcher's? Tell me, could the butcher give us meat, if he had no animals to kill? And who created the animals whose flesh we eat? From whom, then, do we get meat and all foods which are prepared from it.

It is just so, dear children, with our drink. When we are thirsty, oh, what is better or more refreshing than a drink of good cold water? How could we draw water if there were no springs? And the springs in our wells, who created them? So then, the water with which we quench our thirst is a gift of God.

You, children, like to drink milk, do you not? Well, I will tell you a little story:

I was for some time the teacher of catechism in an orphan asylum. That is a place where children are brought up who have either lost father or mother, or sometimes both. The matron would have liked to give the children milk every day, but milk is dear in the city, and who could afford to buy milk every day for so many? Some rich and kind friends of the institution presented the orphans with some cows, which gave plenty of good milk. One day I entered a room where the smaller children of about your age were assembled. There were several bowls of sweet milk on the table around which the children were sitting. Their little hands were clasped, and they were singing in a soft voice:

Milk, the drink of innocence,
Is wholesome and refreshing,
Let us enjoy it with a grateful heart
And thank God for this blessing.

Whom were these children thanking for the milk in their little song? But the milk came from the cows, and these were given to them by kind friends? Could these persons have given them such a present if God had not created the cows? Well, then, the milk which tastes so good comes from God, who created the cows, which give us the milk. What, then, is the third gift which we have received from God? *Food and drink.*

What do you wear on your body? Clothes. Are clothes necessary? Certainly! we should freeze when it is very cold if we had no dresses. Does God give us dresses, too? I thought we got them from the dressmaker. My dear children, you must not make a mistake. The dressmaker makes dresses, but they really come from God. If the dressmaker had no goods, could she make a dress? Dress goods are made of wool and also of cotton. What animal gives us wool? And who made the sheep? And who makes the cotton to grow in the fields? From whom, then, do we get our clothes? Now N. name all the things which we have learnt that we receive from God. Life, health, food and drink, *clothes.*

Now, dear children, there are many other good things which God gives us, but it would take too long to name them all, therefore, we say briefly: *and all things.*

I will repeat to you again what I have told you about God that He gives us so many things. God gives us our life, health, food and drink, clothes, and all things. Is it not a blessing that we have such a good God in heaven, who cares for us as a father and gives us so many good things?—(Repetition.)

What does a good child do when someone gives him something which he likes very much? *He says, "Thanks."* O children, I beg of you, never be ungrateful; nobody likes an ungrateful child; whereas, children who say "Thank you" for everything are liked by everybody, as the saying has it:

The world admires gratitude,
But everyone hates ingratitude.

You have heard that all good things come from God, which we have: life, health, food and drink, clothes, and everything. What must you do to God for these? Now, I will tell you what to do when you thank God for His gifts. You must fold your hands and pray to God. How do we thank God, then, for His goodness to us? *We fold our hands and pray.*

Yes, children, prayer is a thanksgiving very pleasing to God.

There are certain stated times when we should pray, and I want you to pay attention to this. You must pray *night and morning, before and after meals, when the Angelus is given with the bell, and in church.* Yes, dear children! particularly when you receive something good from God, look up to heaven thankfully and say: O my God, I thank Thee for this with all my heart! You know, now,

that you must give thanks to God and pray to Him, will you do this? Do not forget this, because it is a dreadful thing when children are ungrateful, who receive and enjoy so many good things from God, do not think of God; the following story will prove this to you:

Cassie was a willing child, but she had the fault of forgetting soon what anyone said to her. One day she came home from school just as her mother placed the dinner on the table. She cried out joyfully: "Mother, dear! I learnt something to-day which I did not know before; that God gives us food and everything good." "Indeed," replied her mother, "did I not cook it and give it to you?" "But God," said Cassie, "let the grain grow from which flour and food is made." "Well," said her mother, "as you have paid attention so well, I will give you something to eat at once." Cassie laid her books down, sat down to table, and was going to eat. Then her mother raised a warning finger, and said: "Cassie! the horse and the dog eat without thinking of God and without praying to Him; do you want to be like them?" Cassie was ashamed, and dropped her spoon, and said her grace. The mother added: "So that you may not forget to say your grace any more, remember this little verse:

'Give thanks to God for all He gives you,
For clothing, life, for drink and food.'"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

29. Have we received other gifts from God? What can you tell me about God? That He has given us so many good things.

30. Name some of the gifts which we have received from God. Life, health, food and drink, clothes and all things.

31. What does a good child do when some one gives him something which he likes very much? He thanks.

32. How do we thank God then for His goodness to us? We fold our hands and pray.

33. When must we pray particularly? We must pray night and morning, before and after meals, when the signal is given with the bell, and in church.

X.

Morning Prayers.

My dear children! when your parents send you to an aunt or other relative to ask for something, they tell you beforehand how you must address them, else you might behave yourselves very awkwardly. Therefore, I will teach you now how you must speak to God when you ask Him for anything, or when you thank Him.

You know that everybody must pray in the morning, as soon as he awakes from sleep. Why must we pray, then? Children! when you are asleep at night you know nothing about yourselves; your parents are asleep, too, and most of the time there is no one awake in the whole house. How often has it happened that grown people and even children, have been killed during the night by wicked men, or have suffered some other kind of injury? Do you know who never sleeps whilst you are sleeping, but watches over you? Yes, God watches over you, that nothing bad may happen to you during your sleep, and you should think about Him as soon as you awaken from sleep, and then pray:

O God! for watching over me
This night, my heart is blessing Thee.

God has watched over you as a Father during the night. He has strengthened you by a refreshing sleep, and protected you from all harm; now, therefore, you must do something to please God. You must praise God, glorify Him and thank Him and then you pray to God:

With grateful heart, I'm praising Thee
For all that Thou hast done for me.

Now, my dear children, when you have praised and given glory to God, because He has watched over you so paternally during the night, when you have thanked Him for your sound sleep, your morning prayer is not yet finished. God has permitted you to live to another day, in which you will again want so many things, which God alone can give you. You must behave like good children do when they want their father or mother to give them something; and what do good children do when they expect something from their parents? They ask for it. You must ask God for everything that you want from Him during the day. As something bad may happen

to us in the night, this can happen also by day. Or did you never hear of a man losing his life, breaking an arm or a leg, or what is far worse, being wicked, and offending God? Dear children, who alone can protect us from all misfortune? So that God may protect you during the day from sin, death, and every ill, you must beg of Him with all your heart, and pray also:

Preserve me also on this day
From sin, and death, and harm, I pray.

There are some people who work all day, and who give themselves a great deal of trouble, and yet they never seem to have done anything; they are not fortunate or blessed. There is a great deal of truth in this saying:

God's blessing you need,
If you want to succeed.

And so it is. Man may take ever so much trouble; if God does not will it, if He does not give it His blessing, no trouble is of any use. We cannot even have a good thought without God's blessing, much less a good action. And we must pray to our Father in heaven for this blessing, that He may bless all that we think in our hearts, all that we say with our mouths, and all the actions that we perform. Now, learn how you must beg for this! You pray quite simply:

And what I think, and do, and say,
May have Thy blessing, Lord, I pray.

Yes, dear children, if you pray in this manner, with devotion to God, He will surely bless you, and you will be convinced that in all the good which you will do during the day you will take great pleasure, and that everything will be right with you.

When you were hardly a year old, dear children, you could not walk alone, you had to be carried and lifted; you could not even eat alone, your food had to be put into your mouth. If no one had been there to feed and take care of you, you would not have arrived at the age you now are, you would have perished miserably. But God has provided for you, He gave you your parents, who received you lovingly and fed you, and with the greatest trouble and care have raised you up to this age. O how many accidents might have happened to you during this time, if your parents had not watched

over you and protected you. How often would you have hurt yourself with a knife, if your father had not called out: "Put the knife away, my child, you might cut yourself with it." How often would you have fallen into the water, if your mother had not warned you and cried out: "Keep away from the water, or else you will fall in and be drowned." And there are thousands of accidents which might have befallen you, if your parents had not been there to protect you. Parents, dear children, no matter how much they would like to, cannot always be with you and protect you from all dangers; for this reason God has ordained someone else to protect you from all dangers of body and soul, and this is your guardian angel. O rejoice and thank God, dear children, who has given to each one of you, even to the smallest child, a guardian angel, who, although you cannot see, is with you invisibly and protects you from all danger. Whom has God given you for a companion? You must call upon these holy guardian angels to protect you from all dangers. Perhaps your mothers have taught you already that little prayer to the guardian angel. It is:

O Guardian Angel mine,
Protect me in this life;
'Till heaven shall be mine,
Help me in every strife.

Especially in your morning prayers you must not forget your holy guardian angel, but you must call upon him and beg him to protect you during the day.

Your guardian angel will certainly do this, and if you are good he will be much pleased with you. Do you wish to give this pleasure to your holy guardian angel? Angels, my dear children, have appeared to men sometimes in the form of a beautiful youth, and have helped them in many a trouble, and protected them from danger. You have doubtless seen pictures of the holy guardian angels? Now I will tell you a little story about a holy angel who appeared to one man and saved him from a great danger:

The young Tobias had to make a journey into a distant country. God sent the angel Raphael to him in the form of a youth to accompany him, and protect him from harm. As they came to the river Tigris, Tobias went into the water to wash his feet. All at once a monstrous fish rose up out of the water to devour him. Tobias screamed with fright and called out aloud: "O Lord! he

has seized hold of me." But the angel said: "Seize him by the fins and draw him out." Tobias did so, and drew the fish on land, where it struggled at his feet and could not harm Tobias any more.

You see the angel saved young Tobias from a great danger. O my dear children, you would certainly have lost your lives in many dangers had it not been for your holy guardian angels. You must, therefore, love them very much, call upon them frequently for protection and help, and obey them. So that you may remember this, learn the following little verse:

Obey thy guardian angel with love
Whene'er he moves thy heart,
And he will take thee to heaven above
When from this life thou must depart.

When children are sick, or want something, they generally take refuge with mother, because they know that mother loves them and will help them, if it is possible. O my dear children, I will tell you something most joyful which, perhaps, some of you do not know yet, namely: that we have a Mother in heaven, who loves us dearly and who helps us in all our necessities. This Mother of ours in heaven is called Mary, and she is the Mother of the Son of God. You have all asked her intercession before, because you all know the prayer: Hail Mary, full of grace, and so on. You must not forget Mary, the Mother of God, in your morning prayer, for she loves you all tenderly and begs God to hear our prayer. You should say too:

O Mary, Jesus' Mother,
Pray to thy Son for me;
May He be praised with fervor
For all eternity.

Why we call upon the Mother of God is, dear children, that she should pray to God for us, to Jesus her divine Son, that God may hear us. I will make this plainer to you, in the following little story:

Little Marguerite saw that some of the school children had received from their parents the nicest little prayer-book. She wished for nothing so much as to have one like them, but she did not like to ask her father to buy her one; for she had been disobedient to her father and she had displeased him. So she went to her mother, and begged her to ask her father if he would buy her a little book like the other children's, and she said: "I will surely not displease him

any more, but will be very good and obedient." After she had told her mother how sorry she was, and with tears in her eyes had promised to improve, her mother took her to her father, saying: "Dear father, Marguerite is very sorry for her fault, and earnestly wishes to reform; please forgive her this time and buy her the little prayer-book which she so much wishes to have." The father answered: "You were a naughty, disobedient child, and deserved punishment instead of reward, but because you are sorry for your faults and will do better for the future, and particularly because your mother has interceded for you, I will not punish you, but buy you the little book." Marguerite did really improve, and she took much pleasure in the little book, and prayed in it devoutly in church, like a little angel at the throne of God.

Children, would Marguerite have received this little book if her mother had not spoken for her? So it is with us, when we are so often disobedient and displease God, we do not deserve that God should hear our prayers, but instead we deserve that He should punish us; we should, therefore, when we are so unfortunate as to offend God, be sorry for our fault, and take refuge with the Mother of God, and when *she* prays to God for us, God will certainly hear us, if it is useful and best for us. Pray, therefore, dear children, every morning devoutly to God, ask the holy guardian angel, and especially Mary, the Mother of God, to intercede for you, and you will surely be protected all through the day from all harm, and be very good obedient children, in whom God and everyone is well pleased. Now for your morning prayers, you must say Our Father, Hail Mary, and the Creed, which I am sure you all know, do you not?

(This morning prayer must be repeated to the children before school, until they have it impressed upon their memories.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

34. Say the Morning Prayer.

O God! for watching over me
This night, my heart is blessing Thee.
With grateful heart, I'm praising Thee,
For all that Thou hast done for me.

Preserve me, also, on this day
From sin, and death, and harm, I pray.
And what I think, and do, and say,
May have Thy blessing, Lord, I pray.

O Guardian Angel mine,
Protect me in this life;
Till heaven shall be mine,
Help me in every strife.

O Mary, Jesus' Mother,
Pray to thy Son for me;
May He be praised with fervor
For all eternity. Amen.

XI.

Night Prayers.

My dear children! You have all seen a lamb, have you not? Lambs are very nice, harmless little animals. I am very fond of them, and I am sure you all like them very much, too. I once noticed something about one of these little animals which pleased me greatly, and I will now tell you about it. I once passed a meadow, in which a flock of sheep was grazing. Several lambs which were amongst them were frisking about, and after they had jumped about enough, they lay down to rest in the grass. Now, what I liked to see was that, before they lay down, they bent first the one front leg and then the other, and after they had knelt for a moment, they then lay down on the grass to rest.

These lambs knew nothing about God, but I thought to myself how these irrational animals would put to shame many men who know something about God, who receive so many benefits from Him, but who lie down to rest without thinking of God or without thanking Him, without having beforehand knelt down to pray. Never be so ungrateful, dear children, toward the good God; do not let an irrational lamb put you to shame, but every evening, before you lie down to sleep, pray first to God, thank Him for all His goodness, which you have received from Him during the day, and then lie down to rest. Dear children, you have heard that we must lift up our hands, and kneel down; but that is not enough, we must also lift up our hearts to God. Which of you can tell me what it means to lift up our heart to God? O children, you can do this in a moment. You have only to think of God. Our thoughts come from our hearts; when, therefore, you think only of God when you

are praying, then you are lifting up your heart to God. How do we lift up our hands to God? How do we lift up our hearts to God? Remember, then, that when you pray, your hands and your heart must be lifted up to God, as the little verse says:

Lift up thy hands and heart
When praying, heavenward.

And when at night you lift up your little hands and your heart to God, your loving Father in Heaven, you must repeat this verse, with great devotion:

When I lay me down to rest,
I pray to God with zeal and zest,
Thank Him for all He's given me,
And through the day protecting me.

The first thing we must do when we say our night prayers is to thank God from our hearts for everything which we have received during the day.

Something may happen to us, dear children, as it unfortunately happened to a little child I am going to tell you about.

Little Agnes' mother had to go to market, so she said to Agnes: "Now, be a good girl and stay at home; be sure not to get into any mischief, and I will bring you something real nice from the market." Agnes was so delighted at this, that, as soon as her mother left the house, she began to jump upon the table and the chairs. Unintentionally she knocked against a pitcher, which fell to the floor, and was broken to pieces. This scared Agnes very much, and she cried out, with tears in her eyes: "O my, what will mother say when she comes home; instead of giving me something nice, she will give me a whipping." Whilst she was crying, the cat jumped up on the chair. As quick as lightning the idea came to her, "You can say that the cat did it." But an interior voice said "For shame! that would be a lie, and you would offend God by saying so." "No," thought Agnes, "I would rather tell the truth to mother, and ask her to forgive me." And she did this. Her mother scolded her for her thoughtlessness, but did not whip her, because she had acknowledged her fault so openly, and was sorry for it.

Ah, dear children! what befell little Agnes happens every day to one child or another. From carelessness, but sometimes even out

of malice, which is still worse, you do something during the day displeasing to God, which offends Him. Such children are greatly to be pitied. But what is the best thing for them to do, when they have done anything wrong? Should they lie down to sleep without thinking any more of their fault?—Whom have they offended?—Of whom, then, must they ask forgiveness? When, my dear children, you are so unfortunate as to offend God, you must be very sorry for this, and ask His forgiveness when you say your night prayers, and then, when you think of your fault say:

If I this day offended Thee,
I pray, O Lord, forgive it me.

As you asked your guardian angel when you said your morning prayers to protect you, you must do the same when you say your night prayers, and then you can lie down in peace, because you know that whilst you are sleeping your holy angel guardian watches over you. Then say this little verse:

I now can lay me down to rest
While angels watch at Thy behest.

To whom did I tell you to pray in a special manner at your morning prayers, if you wanted to obtain something from God? Yes, dear children, the Mother of God, for she is your Mother, also, and she loves you all tenderly. Recommend yourselves to her motherly protection every night, and ask, with childlike confidence:

O Mary, beloved Mother mine,
Take care of me, I'm wholly thine.

Children! look at this crucifix! See the wounds in the hands, in the feet, and in the side. This image represents to us Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Redeemer, who died for us upon the cross. Later on I shall have many things to tell you about Jesus Christ. To-day I only want to exhort you to recommend yourselves every night to His five Sacred Wounds and say:

O Cross of Jesus, come and protect me;
From all the evils come and guard me;
In all Thy wounds let me take part,
Then I can sleep with a happy heart. Amen.

And then you should say one Our Father and the Creed, make the sign of the cross, and, taking some holy water, lie down, quietly to sleep. My dear children! will you say your prayers well, and never forget your morning and night prayers? Oh, be sure to keep this promise, and begin now in your youth to be good, pious children, for if you were now to be lukewarm and lazy in saying your prayers, it is quite possible you might remain like this for the rest of your lives.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

35. How should we pray to God at night?

When I lay me down to rest,
I pray to God with zeal and zest;
Thank Him for all He's given me,
And through the day protecting me.

If I this day offended Thee,
I pray, O Lord, forgive it me.
I then can lay me down to rest
While angels watch at Thy behest.

O Mary, beloved Mother mine,
Take care of me, I'm wholly thine.

O Cross of Jesus, come and protect me;
From all the evils come and guard me;
In all Thy wounds let me take part,
Then I can sleep with a happy heart. Amen.

XII.

The Angelus, and Grace Before and After Meals.

Every morning, as soon as day dawns, at twelve o'clock noon, and late in the evening, there is heard in every part of the world where Catholic Christians live a sound of the bell, whereby we are reminded to say certain prayers. You have often heard this sound of the bell, dear children, and very likely you have said this prayer with your parents; who can tell me what this prayer is called?—Yes, it is called the Angelus, because the Angel Gabriel used these same words when he saluted the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Now, dear children, I will first teach you how to say the Angelus, and later on I will explain to you the beautiful meaning of this prayer.

When, therefore, you hear the bell ring for this prayer, you must

make the sign of the cross, wherever you may be, and pray: *The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Ghost;* Hail Mary, and so on. After this we repeat the words which Mary spoke to the Angel, and pray:

Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary, and so on. And then at the end we pray: *And the Word was made Flesh: and dwelt among us.* Hail Mary, etc.

Devout Christians here add an Our Father for the poor souls in Purgatory, that God may release them from their sufferings, and take them to Heaven, and then they conclude with these words: *Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.* Amen.

Unfortunately, dear children, there are Christians, and even grown-up people too, who are so lukewarm and lazy about their prayers, that when they hear the sound of the bell, they do not say the Angelus. They are even ashamed, if they are out, to raise their hat and pray. Are these people good, devout Christians?

Prayer, my dear children, is something which is very pleasing to God; we must, then, never be ashamed to pray, but we ought to be ashamed to be so ungrateful as not to say our prayers. No matter where you may be, then—at home, or in the street playing or working—when the bell rings, then say the Angelus devoutly. Will you promise me this?

It is customary in many countries to give a reward at the end of the school term to those children who have been good. A father said one day to his two little boys: "Children, I am going to send you to school now; if at the end of the year you bring home a prize, I shall give you something which will give you great pleasure. But if you are not diligent you will not get a prize; so do not forget:

"'No work,
No reward.'"

Peter, who was the older of the two brothers, had already learned a good deal at home, and so he thought, because he knew more than his younger brother, that he would not have to be so diligent—he would get a prize anyhow. But by degrees he became very lazy with his studies. Anthony, the younger brother, reminded him frequently of what their father had said, but Peter thought that he was sure of his reward.

Anthony, on the contrary, was very diligent and an attentive and obedient pupil, and at the end of the year he really obtained the first prize. His father was much pleased, indeed, at this and bought several useful presents for the diligent boy, which pleased Anthony very much. But he said to lazy Peter, who stood by, ashamed: "You did not mind the first advice that I gave you, but never again forget that without work, there is no reward. You have now found out how true this is, for you not only have received no prize, you will also be punished as your laziness deserves." The father then gave him a severe punishment, which made him more diligent in the future.

My dear children! as it happened to these two boys at the end of the school year, so will it happen to us at the end of our lives. God will give a glorious reward to all those who have been diligent and good—the reward of heaven. But the wicked, lazy ones will be terribly punished by God. He will cast them into hell. How will it be with you, my dear children? Those who wish to receive heaven for a prize must use care and diligence all through their lives, and behave like good, industrious people.

Now, children, which of you can remember the story of little Louise, which I told you about last week? She told her mother that food and drink and everything was given to us by God. And do you remember what her mother told her, when she began her dinner? Yes, we must all say our grace before meals, and as we must pray before our meals, we must also thank God after our meals for the food that He has given us. I will teach you a short prayer, to be said before and after meals. Now pay attention, that you may be able to remember it, and never forget to say it.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS.

O Lord, who gives us everything,
We'll every day Thy praises sing,
Thou giv'st us food, in Thy great love
And send'st Thy blessing from above.

Our Father, etc. **Hail, Mary, etc.**

GRACE AFTER MEALS.

We thank Thee, Lord, for food and drink,
Of Thy great love we'll always think;
Thou gav'st, and Thou wilt always give.
Our love is Thine, long as we live.

Our Father, etc. **Hail, Mary, etc.**

[As these instructions are for small children, the Prayer, "Pour forth, we beseech thee, thy grace," etc., is omitted.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

36. How do you pray when you hear the Angelus bell ring? The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary, etc.

37. How does this prayer continue? Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy word." Hail Mary, etc.

38. How is the third part of this prayer? And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. Hail Mary, etc.

39. Devout Christians here add an Our Father for the poor souls in Purgatory; how do they conclude this prayer? By saying: "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen."

XIII.

God Sees All Things; He Hears All Things; He Knows All Things.

We have just, my dear children, said what is generally called the Lord's Prayer, or the Our Father; what did you do with your hands during the prayer? Did your parents and brothers and sisters at home see how you lifted up your hands to Heaven? Did not the pupils in the next room see it? O no, they cannot see through the wall. I know Someone, though, who did see you, who in fact sees all things—who is this?—Yes, that is God. For God sees all things. Observe this, above all things, about God: *That He sees all things.* Who created our eyes, with which we see so well? My dear children, would it be possible that God, who has created the eye to see with, could not see, too? Who could believe this! Never forget, then, all your life long, that God sees all things. What have I said about God?

Where do the people go on Sundays and Holy days when they worship God together, hear the sermon, and assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? You have of course all been to church; does God see us there, also?—Yes, indeed; therefore, you must never talk, nor laugh, nor look around in church. Who would see you? Name a place where God sees all things. The Church. Where are we now—in church, too? *In school.* Who sees you also, in

school? Behave, then, well in school, for God sees you there, and He is only pleased with attentive, good children. When school is over, you are allowed to go out. Where do you go then? Who sees you at home, too? When, therefore, you are at home, you should be very obedient to your parents. When they give you something to do, do not say: "I don't want to;" for where does God see you besides in church and in school? *At home.* The way home leads you through different streets and avenues. That part where the children play the most is called the sidewalk. We have often noticed that the children are rough one toward the other; they fight, and throw stones, and behave badly in many ways. This ought not to happen again, children, for where else does God see you? *On the sidewalk.* Now we have mentioned four places where God sees all things; which of you can name them to me?

Early to-day before the sun rose, it was night; what is it now?—And when the sun sets again, what will it be then?—At night, dear children, we can see very little, or hardly at all; is it not the same with God? It will surprise you to learn that God sees as well by night as He does by day. When does God still see us? *By day and night.*

There are many other places and times where God sees us, my dear children. It is unnecessary to enumerate them all, so you need only answer when you are asked where does God see us: *everywhere.* [Repetition.]

A prominent family arrived one evening in a village on their travels. As the next day was Sunday the journey was not continued, but the family went to church with their children and servants. After the service, they looked at the school and the village. When they returned to the inn, Max, the eldest boy, stood at the door of the room, and cried out, in astonishment: "This is the fourth eye that I have seen painted here. Over the altar in church there is an eye, beautifully painted on glass; over the entrance to the school there is another one; in the street I noticed one on the highest gable of a house, and now I see one here, painted over the door of the room. These country people must have strange ideas; I would rather paint a whole face, or the entire figure of a man."

The father, so as to correct his son's ignorance, called the landlord's little daughter to him, and asked her: "My good child, can you tell this boy the meaning of this eye?"

The little girl answered, shyly: "That represents the eye of God.

It is to be found painted in the church, in the school, in the houses, on the street, and in other places. Wherever we see it we should remember that God sees all things. The pastor has taught us a pretty little verse about it, so that we may not forget it:

" 'Where'er you go, whate'er you do,
Remember ever, God sees you.' "

"Now, Max," said the father to his son, "do you still find anything to blame about this eye, now that you have heard what a beautiful meaning there is attached to it?"

Max turned red, and was silent, and for the future was more careful of judging hastily.

Children, look at me, and keep very quiet!*—Who of you can tell me what I was thinking of in my heart? What, none of you know? Who knows the thoughts of our hearts? Our thoughts are in our hearts; can God see them? *God can look into our hearts.* When we think in our hearts are our thoughts known to men? Who does know them? Why? As you cannot see into my heart, you could not tell me just now what I was thinking about. I was thinking if these children never have any bad thoughts in their lives, they will always be innocent and unspotted from every sin. Now, do you know what I thought? How did you find it out? Must we tell God first, also? How, then, does God know it? Yes, God can see into the hearts of men, and He knows what they think; the following little story is a proof of this:

The first human beings, Adam and Eve, had two sons. The older was called Cain; the younger Abel. Cain, who was the stronger, worked in the fields. Abel, who was not so robust, was a shepherd. God blessed Cain's farming, and Abel's sheep-tending. Then Cain offered a sacrifice to God of the fruits of the earth. Abel sacrificed to God the first young lamb of his flock.

God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice. But He took no notice of Cain and his sacrifice. Why was this? They both offered sacrifices. Each one gave what he had. But God does not only look at the exterior. He regards principally the interior—the heart. When Abel offered his sacrifice, his heart was full of gratitude and love toward God. Cain's devotion was only on the outside; in his heart there were no pious, grateful thoughts. Now, exterior devotion alone is hypocrisy, and this is abominable in the sight of God.

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* Be silent for a few moments.

Why was God pleased with Abel's sacrifice? Why did He take no notice of Cain's? How does God know what we think? What kind of thoughts, then, should we always have? Why? My dear children, be very careful not to be hypocrites; that is, men who speak and act differently from what they think in their heart. We can easily deceive men, but not God, who sees all things. If you look into a clear lake, you can see the fish swimming about, can you not? In the same way God can see the thoughts in our hearts; never, then, think of anything wicked, because God sees it; He can look into our hearts.

Tell me: Have you heard everything which I have said to-day about God? With what did you hear it? Who created the ear of man, which is so finely arranged that we can hear with it? Does God hear all that we say? Yes, indeed, dear children! Could He who made the ear not be able to hear? Who could believe such a thing! And this, children, is the second thing which you have to observe about God to-day: *That He hears all things.* How foolish, then, are those men who speak of bad things amongst themselves, and then imagine that no one has heard them. Who hears everything that we say? Dear children, you would not dare to use bad, shameful words, if you knew that I, or your parents heard you. Never forget God in all your conversations. He hears everything, and how could you speak of bad, wicked, dreadful things, knowing that God heard you.

Who can tell me at this moment what the President is doing? You do not know? Neither do I know, dear children. Who does know, however? Yes, God knows; He knows everything that we do; and this is the third thing which we must observe about God: *That He knows all things.* And if I ask you: What? does God know everything? You must answer: "He knows *what we think, what we say, and what we do.*" What, then, have I told you to-day about God? Name some places where God can see us. And how does God know all things? My dear children! I beg of you never to forget for a moment in the course of your lives that God sees you everywhere, that He hears and knows all things. Think of this particularly when anything bad happens to you, or when wicked men try to teach you wrong, or lead you into temptation. God sees me. This thought arouses in us a wholesome fear of doing wrong. He who always thinks of God and fears to offend Him by sinning, he is a God-fearing man. But he who forgets God, and

never thinks of Him, that man is ungodly. What kind of children do you wish to be, ungodly or God-fearing? Who is it that you must never forget, and who should be ever present to you? Yes, dear children, always think of God, never offend Him by sin, and then God will look down upon you with pleasure, and He will preserve you from all harm. That the thought "God sees me," particularly when you are tempted to do wrong, will preserve you from sin, the following little story will make plain to you:

A boy once called at a house to fetch one of his schoolmates. When he entered the room there was no one there, but he saw a basket of apples near the window. "What lovely apples!" he thought to himself; he went a little nearer and looked at them with longing eyes; he actually put his hand in the basket to take one—"But—no!" he said, "that would be wrong; I must not do so. Even if nobody sees me, God sees me; for He sees all things, hears all things, and knows all things." He turned away from the basket of apples, and was leaving the room. "Stay a moment!" someone cried out in the room. How the boy was startled! He was still more scared, as he saw an old man come toward him from behind the closet door. "Don't be afraid," said the man to the boy; "you are a good child! Because you remembered that God sees you, you may take as many apples as you want; fill your pockets, too, and remember these lines all your life long:

"'Where I am, and what I do
Is known to God, my Father, too.'"

This little verse, dear children, you have very likely heard before; perhaps some of you know it; keep it well in mind, and think of the words so short and beautiful. "Where I am—in church, in school, at home, on the sidewalk, by day and night, in fact, everywhere; and what I do—I may think, I may speak, I may act—God Almighty sees me; He who only loves that which is good, and detests that which is wicked, my Father—the best of Fathers, who has already given me so many good things, and will give me more—He sees me. How can I offend Him and do wrong?" You will love God, dear children, will you not, and never forget Him, or offend Him by sinning; will you promise me this?—Who heard your promise? Mind, then, that you keep it. By so doing you will give the greatest pleasure to God!

40. Does God, then, hear us when we pray; what can you tell me about God? That He sees all things, that He hears all things, that He knows all things.
41. Name some places where God sees us. In church, in school, at home, on the sidewalk, by day and night, and everywhere.
42. What else can God see? He can see even into our hearts.
43. What does God know about everything? He knows what we think, what we say, and what we do.

XIV.

God Loves That Which Is Good, and Hates and Detests That Which Is Wicked.

My dear children! In the last instruction you heard how God sees all things, hears all things, and knows all things: that He can look into our hearts, and knows what we are thinking of, what we say, and what we do. I admonished you to think of this frequently, especially when you are tempted to do wrong. Now I will tell you why we must only do good and not evil.

Children! What do you think, is it all the same to God whether we do good or evil? Which do you believe that God loves and desires, good or evil? Observe then that, *God loves that which is good.* It is not, therefore, all the same to God whether we are good or bad, but He wishes that we should only do that which is good, for He loves so much that which is good, it pleases Him, it makes God happy.

Can you tell me the names of the first man and woman? Who created them? Where did they live? What was Paradise? Listen now, how God showed our first parents that He loved the good and hated evil.

In Paradise there were all kinds of fruit-bearing trees. Therefore God said to Adam: "You can eat of all the trees in the garden, but of this tree which stands in the middle of the garden, you must not eat. For as soon as you shall eat of it, you shall surely die." Dear children, God did not wish that the first man and woman should die, but that they should be happy and live. So long as our first parents obeyed God, and only ate of the other trees, and not of that one which God had forbidden, they were very happy and contented in Paradise, and God was well pleased with them because they were obedient. What

did God forbid our first parents in Paradise? Did God wish them to be unhappy and die? What does God desire, and what does He love?

But our first parents were not always so obedient. One day Eve went up close to the forbidden tree. And she saw a serpent on the tree. The devil had hidden himself in this serpent. The serpent spoke and said to her: "Why did God forbid you to eat of the fruit of all the trees?" Eve entered into conversation with the serpent and said to him: "We can eat of all the trees in the garden, only of the tree in the middle of the garden God said: 'Thou shalt not eat of it! Touch it not, or thou shalt surely die.'" "No," said the serpent, "you would not die! As soon as you taste of it your eyes will be opened; you will be like unto God, knowing good and evil."

At these words Eve looked at the tree. The forbidden fruit looked very beautiful and enticing. The longer she looked, the more beautiful and enticing it appeared. And she stretched forth her hand and plucked the fruit, and ate of it. She gave some to her husband, Adam, and he ate some, too.

O children! was this right of our first parents? Whom did they obey? Whom ought they to have obeyed? O poor people! God loved them so much, and gave them so many pleasures, but they were disobedient, and did what God had forbidden them to do. Could God be well pleased at their disobedience? No; He was displeased and He detested it. Take notice, therefore, that *God hates and detests that which is wicked.* We ought, therefore, desire and do that which is good, and to hate and detest that which is wicked; because God only loves that which is good, but He hates and detests that which is wicked. What, then, have I told you to-day about God?

Children, who created you, and all the people who are in the world? What is the will of God regarding us? Yes, as God wished that our first parents should be happy, He also desires, dear children, that we should be happy, too. The devil, who tempted our first parents to do wrong, seeks also, although we do not see him, to lead us to do wrong. Ah! there is so much wickedness in the world, and those who do it will be unhappy and most miserable. Do you want to be happy, or unhappy? What, then, must you love? And what must you detest?

But, dear children, you are still so little and so inexperienced, how will you be able to distinguish the good from the bad? Oh! you need not be afraid on this point, as God warned our first parents of that

which was wrong, so will He also warn you. What did God tell Adam that he must not do? Why must he not eat of it? What did our first parents do? They sinned, offended God, and became very unhappy, as you will hear later.

I told you that God warns us of that which is evil. He has often, dear children, warned you already. You will ask, "When did this happen?" Now, think it well over, and you will easily understand that God has already often spoken to you, although you did not see Him. You have all certainly been in the kitchen, in a room, in a garden, or some other place, where nice fruit or some other delicious food was. Tell me, now, did you not feel a desire to eat some of that fruit or that food? But what thought came into your mind at the same moment? Was it not, "That would not be right?" Did not a voice speak to you at that same moment: "Do not do it; do not take it; it would be wrong; it would be stealing!" Children, that is the voice of God in your hearts. We hear this voice as often as we are in danger of doing wrong. This interior voice, which tells us what is good and what is bad, is called Conscience.

By what means does God warn us of that which is evil? By our conscience. What does our conscience always tell us? *Our conscience tells us what is good and what is bad.* How much God must love us, for He cares for us in such a fatherly manner, and always warns us by our conscience when we are in danger of doing wrong. We need only pay attention to this voice, and obey it promptly, and then we shall never be so unfortunate as to do wrong and offend God. But, children, this is the trouble with most people. They do not listen to the voice of their conscience, nor obey it, but they do what their conscience forbids them, are disobedient toward God, and do wrong. These unhappy people offend God, who loves them so much, and they are miserable, and bring disgrace upon themselves, sorrow and misery and all other evils. When, therefore, your conscience warns you of evil, children, what should you do? Obey it. Oh! I beg of you, obey this voice promptly, and then you will always be good, innocent children. Love God. Obey Him, and never offend Him by disobedience. Will you promise me this?

God has arranged, also, in another way, that men may know what they should do and what they should not do. He has written down for them, upon two tablets of stone, what they should do and what they should not do. And you must learn, dear children, what God has written upon these tablets. But I am sure that some of you know

them already. Who can tell me what the Ten Commandments of God are? What did God write upon the two tablets of stone? *The Ten Commandments.*

What have I told you to-day about God? Who tells us always what is good and what is bad? When we hear the voice of our conscience within us, what ought we to do? What did God give to man on two tablets of stone? Say the Ten Commandments. Did God also give our first parents a commandment? Did they obey it? Who tempted them? Were they happy, or unhappy, on account of this?

Children, if you do not want to be unhappy, you must always obey the voice of your conscience. There is a saying that "those who will not listen, must be made to feel." To prove the truth of this, I will tell you a little story.

Little Marguerite had often been punished by her parents on account of her sweet tooth. One day she noticed that her father had forgotten to take the key out of a little closet. She opened it at once to see what it contained. Among other things, she discovered a paper bag, containing what she supposed was sugar. She tasted it, and it was very sweet. But in an hour or so she had violent pains. Then she confessed to her parents, with tears in her eyes, what she had been eating. Her parents were greatly alarmed, and sent at once for a doctor, but all his endeavors to save the child were futile. She had eaten poison, and in the midst of the most excruciating agony she died.

You see, children, what can happen when we are disobedient. Never touch anything that does not belong to you. Children have often been poisoned through eating berries which they did not know were poisonous. Is it not a misfortune to lose our life by our own fault? But what a misfortune it must be to lose eternal happiness, and to be lost for all eternity! What must we do, children, to avoid this unhappiness? We must love that which is good, and we must hate and detest that which is evil. We will pray to God every day that He may give us grace to do this.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

44. Is it not all the same to God whether we do good or evil? What can you tell me on this subject about God? That He loves that which is good, and that He hates and detests that which is evil.

45. Who tells us always what is good and what is evil? Our conscience tells us what is good and what is evil.

46. God tells us, also, in the Ten Commandments, what to do, and what to avoid; which are they? I. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. And so on.

XV.

God Rewards the Good.

Dear children, what I am going to tell you to-day about God is particularly joyful for good people, but dreadful for those who sin and are wicked. How did God treat our first parents as long as they were good and obeyed Him? Yes, the best of fathers can not treat his children better. Listen, now, how God rewarded the obedience of our first parents.

Adam and Eve lived in Paradise, in innocence and joy. Their simple nourishment was the fruit of the trees, and for drink, that which is the most wholesome in the world, pure cold water. They loved God above all things, and they loved each other. God was so good and kind to them! He often spoke to them, and loved them as His children. They did not know what sadness was. Nothing hurt them. They were immortal.

Children, could God have rewarded their obedience better? Is obedience good, or bad? What, then, do we learn from this story? What does God reward—the good, or the bad? Observe well, then, that *God rewards the good.* My dear children, God is the same. He never changes. As He rewarded the good with our first parents, He rewards it now. So that you may have a real pleasure in doing good, especially in being obedient, we will mention some rewards which God gives to good men.

If a child is healthy, and learns easily; if it has good parents, who love and watch over it, and give it a great many pleasures, is such a child happy, or unhappy? From whom, however, has that child received all these things which make it so happy, namely, health, reason, and good parents? Remember this well, children, that all good gifts come from our Father in heaven, as well as a happy life. And to which people do you think that God will give a happy life—the good, or the bad? With what does God generally reward the good? *With happiness.* You all want to be happy, dear children, do you not? What must you do, then? With what does God reward the good?

There are people who work from early morning till late at night, yet who do not prosper; but they always have to struggle with want and poverty, while others seem to obtain all they want without much trouble. They do not work as hard, but still their business is successful, while others lose everything. Children, how is this? There is a proverb which says:

"God's blessing you need,
Or you'll never succeed."

What is the matter with those people with whom nothing succeeds, no matter how hard they work? To which people does God give His blessing—to the good, or to the bad? With what else, then, does God reward the good? *With His blessing.*

There are people who have everything in abundance, who are rich and thought a great deal of, and yet they do not get along well. That kind of people lead a sinful life, they do wrong and offend God, and therefore they cannot get along well. Many children, for instance, think that people live well when they have plenty to eat and drink. But, children, this is a mistake. For people to live well, they must be free from sin, and lead a good life. Who can preserve us from every sin? From whom, then, does true well-being come? And what people will God in particular allow to prosper? With what else, then, does God reward the good? *With prosperity.*

The best reward which God gives to the good, we shall only receive in the next world. What do we call that place of everlasting joy and blessedness, where all the good people go after this life? Do you wish to go to heaven, too? What must you do, then? With what does God reward the good in the next world? *With heaven.* Could we wish for a more glorious reward than happiness, blessing, and prosperity in this world, and in the next world heaven? Be, then, always good and innocent, and beg of God every day that He may give you the strength to accomplish much good, because you know it is not so easy to do good, but it costs us trouble and effort, as you will hear in the following story:

First of all, I must ask you children, where does the corn grow? Does it grow of itself, or must man perform his part? If man neither plowed nor sowed, what would come up? A poor laborer once bought a piece of untilled ground which was full of thorns and weeds. Then he said to his six children: "When our neighbor the well-to-do farmer's wife makes cakes, you all feel badly if you do not have

something nice, too, once in a while. If you will work hard with me to get the thorns and weeds and stones off this land which I have bought, so that it will make a good field, then your mother shall bake you some cakes as soon as the first wheat is gathered, and you shall have all you want of them to eat." "Willingly! We will help you!" said the children. They kept their word, and helped their father faithfully at his laborious work. While the father pulled up the weeds and burned them, the children picked up the stones which were strewn over the field and placed them in a heap. Even the smallest child, a girl of four years, took the pains to carry away the stones in her little basket. The work was finished after several days of toil.

The seed was sown in the field. It grew up and ripened, and when the first wagon-load was taken home it was a real joyful event for this poor family. When, after their hard work, they all entered the room, they found a large dish of cakes upon the table. Parents and children raised their hands to heaven, and thanked God with grateful hearts because He had blessed their work, and they partook of the delicious cakes in peace and happiness.

Children, if these poor people had not tilled this field, what would have grown in it? And so it is with our hearts. Our heart is like a field. If we do not take care to sow and plant good things in our heart, then only sin and wickedness make their appearance, as the thorns and weeds did in the field. Which would you like your heart to resemble—a field full of thorns and weeds, or a field full of lovely wheat? Very well; but you must take care to accustom yourself to that which is good, and we shall mention, therefore, some good things which children should appropriate to themselves.

Children, from whom do we obtain all the good that we have? What should we do to God for all the benefits which He has shown us? And how can we thank God for them? By prayer. And we must pray devoutly. Prayer, therefore, is the first good thing which a child should become accustomed to. Tell me, N., what is the first good thing which a child should become accustomed to? *To pray devoutly.*

I have often heard children scream and cry when they did not get what they wanted. Do such children behave well, or badly? When parents or teachers say or refuse anything, what should children do? *They should obey.* Obedience is something very beautiful and good. If you find it hard sometimes to be obedient, then remember

"That a good child obeys promptly."

Children, what good thing must you do in school? *Learn diligently.* Be good in school; sit still, and pay attention, for, if you do not learn well while you are young, it will be much harder for you later.

What must children always speak, if they wish to be good children? *The truth.* Yes, and this is the fourth good thing which we must get accustomed to.

Children, how many fingers have I on my right hand? We will, then, mention a fifth good thing, so that you may be able to count on your fingers the good which you must get used to. What must children do willingly? *They must work willingly.* Man was made for work, and not for idleness. Do not be dull and lazy.

You now know, dear children, how much good God wishes us to do. You know that God will give you a glorious reward if you do good. Do you wish to receive from God happiness, blessing, and prosperity, and then heaven? Yes, dear children, we will firmly resolve and promise God only to do good, and that we may be able to do this we will beg of God to grant us the grace.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

47. What does God do to the good, and what does He do to the wicked? What can you tell me on this subject about God? That He rewards the good and punishes the wicked.
48. With what does God reward the good? With happiness, with blessing and prosperity.
49. And in the next world? With heaven.
50. Mention something good which children ought to accustom themselves to. To pray devoutly, be obedient, learn diligently, speak the truth, and work willingly.

XVI.

God Punishes the Wicked.

What I am going to tell you, children, to-day, about God is dreadful and terrifying, especially to wicked men. You have heard that, so long as our first parents in Paradise obeyed God, He gave them a glorious reward. But, unfortunately, Adam and Eve did not remain always good. What did God forbid them? Did they obey Him? Who tempted them to be disobedient? What did they do then? Yes, unfortunately, they transgressed the commandment of

God, and so the first sin was accomplished. Listen, now, what else happened.

After they had committed the first sin, Adam and Eve hid themselves among the bushes in the garden, trembling with fear and anxiety before the face of God. But nobody can hide himself from God. They heard the voice of God, and God punished them for their disobedience, as they deserved. God spoke to Eve: "Because thou hast done this, thou shalt bring forth thy children in sorrow, and be subject to Adam thy husband." But to Adam God said: "Cursed is the earth in thy work: thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return." Then God drove them out of Paradise. An angel with a fiery sword guarded the entrance of the garden.

This is how God punishes the disobedient.

Paradise was lost on account of sin. Eve must endure suffering, and Adam laborious work. Sickness, suffering, tears and sighs, and finally death, is what our first parents brought upon themselves by their disobedience. Is this not very sad? From this story you must learn what God does to disobedient men. What does He do to them? What do you learn about God in this story? *That He punishes the wicked.*

God not only gave a commandment to our first parents, but also to us. Which are the Ten Commandments of God? When man transgresses these commandments, and does not do what God wishes him to do, what is he? And what does God do to the disobedient? Do you want to be punished by God? What must you avoid, then? We will, then, mention several bad things which children especially must avoid.

What has God given us in our hearts, which warns us of that which is wrong? When, then, our conscience says, "That is wrong; do not do that!" and a child does it, what kind of child is that? If our parents or teachers forbid us to do something, and a child does it, what kind of child is that? To be disobedient toward God—toward our parents and teachers! Children, this is something wrong, and it must be punished. What does punishment do? If, then, you do not want to be punished, what is the first wicked act which you must guard yourselves against? *Disobedience.*

Children, who induced our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit? God had told them, "As soon as you eat thereof, you shall surely

die!" What did Satan say? Who spoke the *truth*—God, or the devil? What else did the devil do? He told a lie, and by his lying he led our first parents to sin, and thereby made them very unhappy. Who was the origin of lying? Yes, the devil was the first liar, and those men who imitate him and lie, too, are his children, because they obey the devil rather than God. Whose children do you wish to be —the children of God, or the children of the devil? What, then, must you never do? *Lie.* Lying is something very wicked and detestable. Avoid it, therefore, and always speak the truth!

Suppose one of you children celebrates a birthday, and gets on that occasion so many cakes and sweets for presents that you cannot eat them all alone. Would it be right if the other children took secretly some of these good things away from you? What would you call that? That is called *Stealing.* Therefore, what other wicked thing is forbidden by the commandments of God? *To steal.* Stealing is forbidden, and it is a very wicked thing. I will give you a little verse about lying and stealing:

"Thou shalt not lie, nor shalt thou steal,
Nor what thou find'st shalt thou conceal."

I have named three bad things which we must avoid. Who can repeat them to me?

I daresay you have all seen a beehive? What do the bees do all day long? Yes, they fly in and out busily. They seek untiringly among the flowers and blossoms for honey, which they carry into their hive. They work diligently from morning till evening. And do they not obtain a great reward for their toil by the delicious honey which they make? To what end, then, was man created—for work, or for idleness? Is it right for men not to work, but to be always idle? What must you, then, now, while you are young, avoid and detest? *Idleness.* Remember the proverb:

"The devil finds work
For idle hands to do."

People who are idle all day long, fall into all kinds of wickedness. That is the reason they commit crimes, and are lost in time and eternity.

Last time, I named as many good things to you as I had fingers on my right hand. Children, here is my other hand. What is it

called? And how many fingers have I on my left hand? So we will now name a fifth wicked thing, so that you can count upon your fingers those wicked things which you must avoid. A few days ago, I heard a child screaming and crying bitterly. And why do you think that child screamed so? Another bad child had beaten her and pulled her hair. Was that right and good? You must never offend or annoy any one willingly; for *to offend others* is the fifth wicked thing which you must avoid. Is it right for any one to scold, beat, push, or in any other way ill-treat you? Think, then, of this little proverb:

"Do unto others as you would
They should do unto you."

Do our parents do right, or wrong, when they punish a child for being naughty? That is what God does. When men are wicked, God sends them all kinds of punishments. Do you like to be punished? Take notice of the punishments which God generally inflicts upon the wicked, and keep them in your memory, when you are tempted to do wrong. The thought of the punishments of God will inspire you with a salutary fear, which will prevent you from doing wrong. Of the punishments which God sends to the wicked I will tell you more in our next lesson.

XVII.

God Punishes the Wicked.—(*Continued*).

Children, did Adam and Eve take pleasure in their disobedience, when God punished them and drove them out of Paradise? Oh! how they repented the wrong that they had done! What sorrow it must have caused them to have to leave that beautiful Paradise! Children, so does every sin now bring man repentance and bitter suffering. Repentance and suffering are the evils which God inflicts as a punishment upon those who do wrong. With what does God punish the wicked? *With repentance and suffering.* O dear children! if you wish to be happy and joyful, avoid sin; for repentance and suffering on account of sin is a great trouble and punishment.

One day, while I was walking through a large city, I noticed a

crowd of people gathered on the sidewalk, who were looking at a man just arrested by the police, and who was being taken to prison, because he had stolen and committed a robbery. Oh! how ashamed that man felt. He did not venture to raise his head and look at any one. But that was not all. He was later on sent away to jail, and for many years, at hard labor, he passed a miserable life. How did this man fall into such disgrace and such misery? With what, then, does God even now punish the wicked? *With disgrace and misery.*

It has unfortunately often happened that men, out of anger or revenge or for money, have committed a murder. And God has said: "He who sheds blood, his blood also shall be shed." Oh! what a calamity when such a criminal is sentenced and put to death. But, children, it is then too late to lament and cry. Their eyes are blindfolded, and they are led to execution. With such calamities, yes, even with death itself, God punishes the wicked. In what fearful way does God punish the wicked? *With calamity and death.*

But the most dreadful punishment, children, await the wicked in the next world. Where will the wicked go to? With what does God punish them in the next world? *With hell.* O children! when any one gets burned, what dreadful pain this causes. If any of you have ever burned yourselves, you will know how it feels. Hell is called everlasting fire. Oh! how dreadful this must be, forever, without an end, to endure the most dreadful sufferings, the most terrible torments in hell! O dear children! you will never offend God, will you, so as not to be cast into hell? You will promise me this, will you not?

Show me your right hand! Count the good things which I have taught you upon the five fingers of your right hand. Show me your left hand. Count the bad things which I have especially told you to avoid. At the Day of Judgment, children, will God judge all men? Those who have done good He will place at His right hand, and those who have been wicked will be placed on His left hand. Then He will say to those who stand at His right hand: "Come, ye blessed of my Father. Take possession of the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" But to those who stand at His left hand He will say: "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels!" And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.

O children! the mere thought of those damned souls ought to fill

us with fear and trembling. Every time you look at your right or left hand, think of the divine judge, and make a firm resolution to avoid evil and to do good, so that at the last judgment you may not stand at the left hand, but be placed on the right of the eternal Judge. What, then, must you do, and what must you avoid? *Do good, and avoid evil.* Why? What reward does God give to the good? What punishment does He give to the wicked? Tell me of something good. Tell me of something wicked.

Listen to some examples from Holy Scripture, and you will see how severely God punished the wicked in those days. Adam ate the forbidden fruit, and wanted to be like unto God. Then God said: "To dust and ashes shalt thou return!" Eve wished to satisfy her greediness by enjoying the forbidden fruit. Then God said: "Thou shalt bring forth thy children in sorrow!" Cain murdered his brother Abel, and moistened the earth with blood. The earth brought forth no more fruit. He went forth as a wanderer and a fugitive.

When in the time of Noe the people were very wicked and had not improved, God punished the whole world by a flood; but the pious Noe and his family were saved in the ark. In the time of Abraham, God rained down fire from heaven upon the city of Sodom, whose inhabitants were very wicked, and He wiped them from the face of the earth. Abraham had two sons, Ismael and Isaac. Ismael, the eldest one, tormented his young brother Isaac. Then God commanded Abraham to drive the wicked Ismael away, which was done. The Egyptians were so cruel that they ordered all the new-born baby boys of the Israelites to be thrown into the water, where these poor innocent little children drowned. But they, that is, the Egyptians, were drowned, too, in the Red Sea. And there are, dear children, many more stories which you will hear about later, from which we can learn that God rewards the good, and punishes the wicked.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

51. Mention something wicked which children must especially be careful to avoid. Disobedience, lying, stealing, idleness, and offending others.

52. How does God punish the wicked even in this world? By repentance and suffering, by disgrace and misery, by calamity and death.

53. And in the next world? With hell.

54. What, then, must we do, and what must we avoid? We must be good and avoid evil.

XVIII.

All Mankind, who are Descended from Adam and Eve, have Inherited their Sin and their Punishment; this Inheritance is called Original Sin.

(The teacher should provide himself with two apples, a cultivated and a wild one.)

Dear children! You see here two apples. Which of these two apples is the best? Is it not this beautiful large apple? And so it is in reality. This little apple is only a poor crab-apple; it has a sour bitter taste, which makes it unpleasant to eat. Where do apples grow? How is it, then, that *good* apples do not grow on every apple tree? Now, pay attention, and I will explain this to you.

I will cut these apples in half. What do you see in the middle of each one? Now, if you were to take these seeds and plant them in the earth, what would grow up out of these seeds in the spring? Yes, young trees would sprout up, and when these would grow large they would bear apples. Now, children, which tree would bear the largest and handsomest fruit, that from the good seeds, or that which grew up out of the seeds of the crab-apple? You have not guessed this. We should indeed imagine that the tree from the seeds of the good apple would bear good apples; but this is not the case, for all trees, whether they grow from good or bad apple seeds, bring usually forth poor fruit, namely, crab-apples.

Now, you will want to know how it is that there are so many trees, however, which bear good fruit. Children, the trees on which the good fruit grows, have been grafted. The gardener cuts a piece out of the young tree, and then he ties a branch from a cultivated tree on to the stem that is cut. Now, this grows together with the stem, and then this tree bears good fruit. What kind of fruit do these trees bear that have not been grafted? What must be done that they may bear good fruit?

My dear children, I must tell you to-day something very sad about the sin of our first parents. Are those trees that are not grafted, but grown from seeds, good or bad? It is the same with mankind, who descend from Adam and Eve. They are not good, but sinful, when they come into the world. From whom do we all descend? We, too, then, came into the world. God can not take delight in sinful men;

and just as a wild tree can not bear good fruit, so it is that all mankind, because they are bad when they come into the world, can not accomplish anything good, anything pleasing to God; and if God did not help us we should remain always bad. Now, how do all men come into the world; good or bad? You will hear later about that one who was an exception.

Children, how does it happen that we come into the world, not good, but bad? This I will explain to you now. When the parents die, who inherits everything that they leave behind? If, then, the parents leave a fortune, what do the children inherit? And when the parents are poor, and in want, what do the children inherit? Now, this is what happens to all mankind who are descended from Adam and Eve: they inherit that which was left to them by their first parents. Now, we shall hear whether Adam and Eve, our first parents, left us something good or something bad.

How were our first parents, as long as they obeyed God? Yes, they were very good and just. Did they not always remain good and just? Would that they had always remained so good and so just, as God had created them, then we should have inherited this goodness and this justice from our first parents. Who of you can tell me why we can not inherit this goodness and justice from our first parents? Alas, they have lost it. And can we not inherit what they have lost? What, then, did we also lose by the first sin? *We lost goodness and justice.*

Children, what did Adam and Eve do, that they were no longer good and just as God had created them? What did they become by their disobedience, by their sin? And if they became bad through sin, do we inherit that wickedness? Yes, indeed, children! and this wickedness we have all inherited from them, unfortunately. What, then, did we inherit from our first parents? *We inherited wickedness.* Everything wicked is sin, and because we have inherited the sin of our first parents, this sad inheritance is called *Original sin.* What did we lose by the disobedience of our first parents? What have we inherited? What do we call this sad inheritance? For this reason all men are wicked when they come into the world, because they have inherited the sin of their first parents.

Because we have inherited the sin of our first parents, my dear children, unfortunately we must also bear the punishment of this sin, for sin must be punished, whether we committed it ourselves, or inherited it. Are not all men who contract debts obliged to pay

them? And if men take debts with an inheritance, are they not obliged to pay them? And so it is with us as regards sin: with the sin we have also inherited the punishment. What other sad thing have we, then, inherited from our first parents? *We have inherited the punishment too.*

Now, listen of what this punishment consists. Of what does man consist? He will be punished in soul and body. What powers has God implanted in the soul? What can we do with our reason? Before our first parents sinned, their reason was perfect; they could recognize God easily, and that which was right. But by sin, this reason was darkened. Which power of the soul was darkened by the first sin? *Reason was made weak.* Therefore, we could only inherit a weakened reason. You will be able to see for yourselves, dear children, that our reason is really weakened, and that we can no longer so easily understand God and that which is right. If you were not told about God, would you know anything about Him? Are you not obliged to take the trouble to learn something about God? We can tell that our reason is weak, and that without the assistance of others, we could not know about God; we can tell this by the savages who live in remote parts of the world. They have reason, too, but they know nothing about God, because they have no teacher to help their weak reason, and to instruct them. Before sin came, dear children, it was not like this. Our first parents had received from God a good understanding, but what happened to it through sin?

What is the second power called which God has placed in the soul of man? Man's will was also spoilt by the first sin. What can we do with our free will? Before our first parents sinned, their will was good; they only willed what God willed. But after sinning, they wished that which was bad; they desired to do what God had forbidden them. It pleased them better to do their own will than to do the will of God. Is that right? By sin the will was inclined to wickedness. To what was the will inclined by sin? *The will was inclined to wickedness.* And this wicked will has been inherited by all mankind. Is our will really inclined to evil? Which do you prefer to do, children, to play or to work? But which is best, to play or to work? When I have noticed the children in the street, or other places, I have often seen that one child would strike or push another, and that the child who was struck would immediately return the blow. Is this good or bad? To forgive and bear patiently, that

would be right and good; but mankind will not do this. To what, then, is their will inclined?

Children, what did God say to Adam and Eve? What became of them after they had eaten the forbidden fruit? Are Adam and Eve living still? O no, they are dead. O death is an awful thing. If our first parents had not sinned, they would not have had to die, but sinners must die. In what way did the first sin hurt man's body? *All men must die.* And so it is, children; you can see it nearly every day; sometimes an old person dies, sometimes a young one; indeed, even little children die sometimes.

Where did Adam and Eve live before they sinned? O they were very happy! Were they allowed to remain in Paradise after having sinned? God drove our disobedient first parents out of Paradise. Now they had to do hard work, to bear sicknesses and sufferings of all kinds, as God had told Eve: "She should bring forth her children in sorrow." And to Adam: "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." Children, do we live in Paradise? O no, Paradise was lost to us through the sin of our first parents, and hard work, suffering, and all kinds of troubles are our portion. We lost something more glorious than Paradise. Is God pleased with wicked men? Will He let them go to heaven? What else did we lose that was glorious? Name the two glorious dwelling-places which were lost to us by the first sin? *Paradise and heaven.* What a terrible thing it would be for us if, after suffering so much in this world, we could not go to heaven, but should be lost for all eternity. But, dear children, I can give you the consoling news that God can help us, that He will help us, and that He has helped us. By His assistance we can get to heaven. I will tell you about this another time.

Now, answer the following questions: Did the sin of our first parents injure us? God created them good and just; what did we lose also by their sin? By sin they became wicked; what have we inherited from them? What do we call this sad inheritance? What else did we inherit with sin? What disadvantage did this sin bring to the soul? And what disadvantage to the body? What two glorious dwelling-places did we lose? Now, listen to a little story!

There exists a law in some countries that those people who are in debt, and who can not pay them, are imprisoned as a punishment, and the place where they are put is called the debtor's prison. No one can leave this prison until he has paid his debts.

Once upon a time, a king visited these prisoners. They were all

very sad and dejected, because no good friend had offered to pay these debts, which they had partly inherited, and partly incurred themselves. The king had compassion upon their misery, and he said: "Would you not like to be liberated from this prison?" "O yes," they all answered, "we would certainly not get into debt again, if some one would only pay these, and liberate us." Then the king said, "I will send you my son. He will pay your debts and liberate you. Only obey him, and he will make you happy again."

The unfortunate prisoners waited with an ardent longing a long while for the promised deliverer. At last he came. He paid their debts, delivered them from prison, and showed them what they must do to obtain riches and honors. Those who obeyed him became once more happy men. But some of them were ungrateful; they did not obey him, contracted new debts, and got into prison again, and became more miserable than they were before.

Children, was not this king very good and merciful to help these poor prisoners, and send them a redeemer? In the same way God is kind and merciful. By original sin, and the sins which we have ourselves committed, we were miserable and unhappy. But, children, rejoice; the good merciful God has taken pity upon us, and helps us to be good again, and just, and happy. Next time I will tell you what mercy God showed to our first parents.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

55. Have we not also lost something by the sin of our first parents? We lost goodness and justice.
56. What did we inherit from our first parents? We inherited wickedness from them.
57. What do we call this sad inheritance? Original sin.
58. What did we inherit with the sin? The punishment.
59. What loss did the powers of our soul suffer? Our reason was weakened, and our will inclined to evil.
60. How did this sin injure our material bodies? All men must die.
61. What glorious possessions did we lose through this sin? We lost paradise and heaven.

XIX.

God is Merciful to the Wicked, when They Wish to do Better.

You were so pleased, dear children, at what I told you last time about the king helping the unfortunate prisoners out of the debtor's prison. If you had been in this prison yourselves; if you had lan-

guished there for many years, would you not have taken still greater pleasure in that good, kind king? Children! by the sin of our first parents, all mankind was made far more miserable than those prisoners in the debtor's prison. What did all mankind lose thereby? What did they inherit? What do we call this sad inheritance? What else did we inherit with the sin? How did sin injure the soul? How did it hurt the body? And what glorious possessions did we lose thereby? Can there be a greater misery than that which sin has brought upon mankind?

All mankind, and we, too, were miserable on this account; for all men are wicked when they come into the world, and the devil has power over the wicked. He wishes all mankind to be eternally miserable, and to lose heaven; but how delighted am I to be able to tell you, dear children, that God is merciful to the wicked, when they wish to improve. How do all men come into the world? Who has power over the wicked? What would the devil like to do with all mankind? Who will help us out of this great misery?

Now, take notice of this most consoling attribute of God's: *That He is merciful to the wicked, when they wish to do better.* I will repeat this to you several times. Now, listen, children, and I will tell you how merciful God was to our first parents. As long as our first parents obeyed God, they were good and just; they were clad with the garment of innocence. But as soon as they sinned, and were wicked, they lost this garment of innocence, and they saw that they were naked. If a person was driven out of the house naked, what would become of him in the wind and rain, in the cold and snow? He would certainly die from exposure. And this would certainly have happened to our first parents if God had driven them out of Paradise without clothing, into the cold weather. But God took compassion upon them. He was merciful to them, and gave them garments of skins. What mercy did God show our first parents? *God gave them garments of skins.*

Children, have you ever seen a big fire? It is a terrible thing when fire lays waste, as it does sometimes, of whole houses and stores, and reduces them to ashes. Then the people cry and bemoan their misfortune; and they have good cause, for when one loses one's home, it is a very great misfortune indeed. Doubtless Adam and Eve were very sad at being obliged to forsake that lovely Paradise; they must certainly have bitterly repented their disobedience, and have made the firm resolution of never again disobeying God. But

what other glorious place was lost beside Paradise? If our first parents had thought that they had lost heaven, that they were rejected by God for evermore, that the devil had power over them, and would make them miserable forever; if they had had no hope, they must have despaired. To prevent this, dear children, God had pity upon their miserable state. And how do you think God consoled them? He promised them a Redeemer. He said: "There is one coming who will crush the serpent's head. He will take away Satan's power, and He will make the wicked men good and blessed." What consoling promise did God make to our first parents? He promised them a Redeemer. And God sent this Redeemer, dear children. He is our Redeemer, and the Redeemer of all mankind. He makes the wicked good, and helps them to regain heaven, if they obey Him, and let Him help them. Later, you will hear a great many joyful things about this Redeemer. Now, observe this well, however, that God is only merciful to those who wish to become better; for there are people, unhappily, who know very well that they are wicked, and they do not wish to improve, but they would rather obey their own wills, and be lost eternally. To what men, then, is God merciful? What have I told you to-day about God?

Children, we are often so unfortunate as to do that which God does not wish us to do. I beg of you, when you have done wrong, do not remain incorrigible, but repent at once, and ask God's forgiveness, and amend.

Two brothers, about your age, went into a neighboring forest to pick strawberries. You know, children, what strawberries are. You have often eaten them, and found them a most delicious fruit, have you not? These boys found such quantities, that the ground was strewn as if with red beads. They picked and ate all they wanted.

Then a third boy came up, who, when he saw them busy picking, began to tease and to scold them. "Who gave you permission to pick my strawberries?" he cried. "I found out this place a week ago. I discovered these strawberries, and so they belong to me. Get out, you thieves!" "These strawberries don't belong to you on that account," said the elder of the two brothers, "but they belong to those who pick them first, and if you don't stop scolding, we will give you a good beating, for there are two of us, so you had better look out."

The younger brother heard all this, and he said to his brother: "Never mind; don't hit him. Let us go away and look for other

strawberries, sooner than get into a fight." And they did this, and close at hand they found a quantity of larger strawberries.

Now, children, which of these two brothers pleases you the most, the one who wanted to fight, or the one who forgave that bad boy, and went away from him? You like the one who, good-naturedly, forgave, better than the one who would have fought in anger, and taken revenge. Do not forget this, and for the future behave in this kind and merciful way. You will certainly in this life very often be offended and annoyed by others. Ought you to offend and annoy them in return? O certainly not! Think of God, of how compassionate He is to wicked men, and forgives them if they wish to improve. But He desires us, too, to forgive those who offend us. What ought we to do to those who offend us? *We ought to forgive willingly those who offend us.* Always do this when any one offends you, for then God will always be merciful and compassionate to you. For with the measure with which we mete out to others, the same will be meted out to us.

O children, some people are so wicked that they do not want to improve. When God and man forgive them their offenses, they take no heed, and very often they become worse and worse. Where will those people go to one day if they do not improve? What a terrible thing this would be! Just think of it, to be tortured in hell for ever and ever. Dear children, if you were able to make these people better, and save them from going to hell, would you not do so? Could we make all the wicked people good and pious? Who can do this if He wishes to? Can God make the wicked good? Dear children, I am going to ask you to do me a favor. It is the first favor I have asked of you, so I am sure you will not say, nay. And what do you think the favor is? I am not going to ask you for gold or silver, for you could not give me these; but what I am going to ask you for, you can each one of you give me if you want to. I want you to say every day one "Our Father," that God may make all men good, so that they may not go to hell. Who of you will willingly say an "Our Father" daily, that God may make the wicked good. Now, then, a promise must be kept. Those who will not say the prayer had better not promise. But you must not forget to say it. I shall remind you about it often. God hears the prayers of good children. He takes delight in them. What should we do, then, for wicked men, that God may make them good? *We should pray for the wicked.* To avert the punishments of God, and to entreat His

mercies, the prophet Joel says: "Gather together the little ones, and them that suck at the breasts." (Joel ii. 16.) Yes, children, do this to please God, the angels in heaven, and all good people, and pray daily to the merciful God that He may make all the wicked people good and blessed. This is a very good work which will obtain for you a glorious reward. We will now say this "Our Father" altogether. Raise your hands and your hearts to God, and pray devoutly, "Our Father," etc. So that you may see how dreadful it is to be merciless one to another, and to have no pity upon those who are in want, and that such hard hearted people very often bring their own punishment upon themselves, I am going to tell you a little story:

A rich man one day found a beggar boy lying in the gutter. He was crying and moaning aloud. "What is the matter with you, sonny?" said the gentleman, kindly. "Ah!" replied the boy, "my father and mother are dead, and now I must beg my bread. I have just run a splinter into my foot, and I can hardly walk any further for pain." And then he began to sob afresh.

The rich man took pity upon him, took him home in his elegant carriage, and had him attended to by his own doctor. He even told him that if he was good and obedient, he would keep him and bring him up as his own son. Children! was not this gentleman very good and kind?

The boy was quite touched, and promised to be very good. For a long while he behaved very well. Then the gentleman, who wanted to teach him early to be kind and merciful, gave him the money for the poor, and said: "Give a dime to every beggar who comes to the door, but give three dimes to the very old and feeble ones." Children, have not your parents often given you a piece of bread, or some money, to give to a beggar at the door? Your parents wanted to teach you to be kind and charitable by so doing.

Now, listen to what this wicked boy did. As a beggar boy, he had often spent the alms given to him on candy, and now he stole the money from the poor for the same purpose. He drove the poor people away from the door, in the harshest manner, when nobody was looking. Was this not dreadful, dear children? Now listen to what happened to him.

A poor old man came to the door, and begged an alms, and then this bad boy began to abuse him. "You old tramp, get out of this, or I will set the dogs after you." At that moment the gentleman

appeared. He was greatly shocked at this bad behavior, and he said, "How can you behave so badly and so unkindly; you, who were a beggar yourself a short while ago. Leave my house at once! You do not deserve kindness at my hands!" He was obliged to take off his good clothes, and put on his own old rags again; and then he was driven from the house.

Children, never be unkind! God is so merciful to us, and forgives us when we wish to improve. Be merciful, therefore; have pity upon others, especially the poor and needy. Help them willingly when you can, and above all, do not forget what you have promised. What did you promise? For whom are you to say this "Our Father"? And why? Do this, and your reward will one day be great in heaven.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

62. When the wicked wish to do better what can you tell me about it as regards God? He will be merciful to the wicked if they wish to do better.
63. How did God show mercy to our first parents; what garments did He give them? God gave them garments made of skins.
64. And what did God promise them? God promised them a Redeemer.
65. If God is so merciful and forgives so willingly, what ought we to do to those who have offended us? We should forgive gladly all those who offend us.
66. If they do not become better, what should we do for such wicked people? We should pray for them.

XX.

What God Says is Truth, and He Keeps His Promises.

Dear children, I told you a little verse about telling lies. How does this little verse read? Now, mind what happened to a boy that I am going to tell you about. Several poor boys used often to go into the forest to gather the dry wood, tie it in bundles, and carry it home. Among them there was one who took pleasure in lying to his comrades, and making fun of them. He used often to go away from the other boys on purpose, and then he would cry out: "O help, help! I have lost my way." When the other boys ran to his assistance, he laughed at them, and joked them for having been fooled. Children, was this not a shame for this boy to do so? Now listen, how he was one day punished for his lies. One

day he really lost his way, and he cried at the top of his voice: "Help, help! I have lost my way." But his comrades, thinking that he was going to laugh at them again, let him call, and they went home without him. He wandered about in the forest, crying and screaming. Night came on; he knocked himself against a tree; he fell over a log, and hurt himself so much that he could not walk any further, and he was obliged to pass the night in the forest—frightened nearly to death when he was found by his parents the next day, half dead with cold and hunger. Why did this boy get into such trouble? what had he done? Who told the first lie? What did the serpent say to our first parents? What did God say? Was it true? Never forget, dear children, that *what God says is true.* What must you remember about God?

What did you promise me last time that you would do every day? For whom were you to say the "Our Father"? And why? Have you kept your promise? If any of you have forgotten to say it, then say it to-day, for what we have once promised to do, we ought to do. What did God promise to our first parents? Dear children, God did actually send this Redeemer, for what God promises, that He also keeps. But how long do you think it was before God sent the promised Redeemer? Just think! it was four thousand years before the promised Redeemer came! What ought this to teach us concerning God when He promises anything? *What He promises, that He will also keep,* even if it takes four thousand years.

O what a joy it is for us to know that what God says is the truth, and that He will keep His promises. It is not so with men. They often promise something, and do not keep their promise. Sometimes they can not give what they have promised, and sometimes they do not want to give it. You have had this experience already, perhaps? It is not so with God. What ought you to remember about Him?

Now, dear children, all that you have been told about God, is it not wonderful, and does it not make you glad? As often as you make the sign of the cross, and say the words, "In the name of the Father," think that your Father in heaven is God Himself, about whom you already know:

1. That He can make all things that He wills.
2. That He has arranged all things beautifully and well.
3. That He gives us so many good things.

4. That He sees all things, that He hears all things, and that He knows all things.

5. That He loves that which is good, and hates and detests that which is wicked.

6. That He rewards the good, and punishes the wicked.

7. That He is merciful to the wicked, if they wish to do better.

8. What God says is true, and He keeps his promises.

Tell me now, altogether, what I have taught you about God!

(Repetition of Questions and Answers.)

When you make the sign of the cross, and you say the words, "And of the Son," you will wish to know who God the Son is. O children, there are so many beautiful and joyful things to tell you about God the Son, that I am sure you will be more and more delighted to hear about them. God the Son, is the promised Redeemer of the world. His name is—let us pronounce it here for the first time with holy reverence—Jesus Christ!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

67. Four thousand years elapsed before God sent a Redeemer; what can we learn from that? What God says is true, and He keeps His promises.

68. What is the name of the Redeemer of mankind? Jesus Christ.

69. What has God done to make the wicked good again? God sent His Son into the world to make the wicked good.

JESUS CHRIST.

XXI.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is Born in a Stable at Bethlehem.

Dear children! You have now learnt a great deal about God. Tell me, are you not pleased to know so much about God already? But there are many things which you have not heard yet. If you are very attentive, I will teach you more about God. I want you to know how kind and good God is, and how much He loves mankind. How He wishes them to be happy, and to get to heaven one day.

Through what was Paradise and heaven lost? What did the merciful God promise our first parents? Four thousand years elapsed before the promised Redeemer came. I will tell you some of the things that mankind did during these four thousand years. All mankind, who are descended from Adam and Eve, are wicked when they come into the world; their reason is weakened, and their will is inclined to evil. The following story will prove to you the truth of this:

The first son that was born to Adam and Eve, was called Cain, and he was so wicked that he killed his brother Abel. The first born, therefore, was his brother's murderer. More and more men were born, and the more they increased in numbers, the more wicked they became. At the time of Noe, they were so wicked that they thought no more about God, and did not let themselves be led by Him, so that God wiped out the whole world by the flood; only the pious Noe, and all those who were with him in the ark, had their lives preserved by God.

One would think, dear children, that such a terrible chastisement would have made men better. But, no; on the contrary, they forgot God entirely, and what do you think, children, that they worshipped instead of God? Some of them made images of wood or metal, and they adored these images as gods. Some of them worshipped the sun, and the fire; others again adored even animals, as for instance, the ox. Could they have offended God more? Is it not foolish for men who have reason, to worship images which they have made

themselves, as gods? A boy once put these worshippers of false gods to shame. His father adored false gods. So as to prove to his father how foolish it was to adore images, he took a stick and broke all the gods into pieces except one, which was the largest. He put the stick into the hands of this god, and then, running to his father, he said: "Father, the big god has beaten all the little ones, and broken them to pieces." His father looked at him angrily, and said: "Boy, you are mocking me! He can not have done it, because I made him with my own hands; but you must have done it." Thereupon the boy replied: "Do not be angry at me, father. If your gods have no more power than I have in my boyish hands, how can they have created heaven and earth, and everything within them?" At this answer the father was silent.

But mankind did far worse things than this. They made a god out of brass, which was hollow inside. They built a fire in the inside of it, and when it was at white heat they took their children and threw them into the glowing arms of the god, where they were burnt to death. O how these poor children must have screamed and cried! To prevent the sound of their cry from being heard, drums were beaten, and a great noise was made. Children, could God be pleased with such wicked people? Then they offended God by other sins. They were continually quarreling among themselves, and they often murdered one another. What do you think God did? God sent them from time to time good men to admonish them to be better, or God would punish them severely. But what did they often do to these good men, who were called prophets? They persecuted them, and murdered some of them. Then God chastised them severely with war, famine, and pestilence, but they became worse and worse. Children, would you have liked to live among such wicked people? Among these wicked men, there lived some who did not adore false gods, but who served the one true God in heaven, kept His commandments, and lived good lives. These good men suffered a good deal at the hands of the wicked ones, and it grieved them so much to see how greatly God was offended. Now, listen, and I will tell you what these good men did. They besought God fervently that He would take pity upon mankind, and send the Redeemer, that He might make these wicked people better. And God heard their prayer, and sent the Redeemer.

Now, dear children, you will want to know who the Redeemer was whom God sent upon earth. Perhaps you think He was a very

good man, or even an angel. O no, the Redeemer was much more than this. He was the Son of God Himself, sent on earth by God the Father of heaven, to make the wicked people good. What did God do to make the wicked people good again? *God sent His Son into the world to make the wicked men good again.* You tell me, N., and you, W. Now, tell me altogether. Now I will tell you how this happened. In a little town called Nazareth, there lived a poor young virgin. But though so poor in the goods of this world, she was rich in virtues. She was purity and innocence itself. It was her delight to please God, and to do His holy will. She was called Mary, and she was bethrothed to a poor, but godfearing and righteous man, called Joseph.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to this holy virgin. This angel of the Lord brought the message to Mary, and he said to her: "Hail, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women."

You have heard this salutation before, children, have you not? When do you say this prayer? This is how the Angel Gabriel saluted the purest of virgins.

Children, if an angel full of heavenly beauty, shining with glory more beautiful than the sun, were to appear to you in this room and speak to you, would you not be very much frightened? You would not be able to speak for fear! Mary was frightened, too; but not only at the appearance of the Angel Gabriel! For, my dear children, Mary was so pious that God favored her, and, we may piously suppose, had often sent angels to her, and she had seen them with her own eyes. Her guardian angel appeared to her so often that she was quite accustomed to the beauty of the angels. O how good, how holy, must Mary have been that God should send so many holy angels to her, and how much you ought to love Mary. Why, then, was Mary afraid, if she was not afraid of the angel? She was frightened at the salutation. And why at the salutation? Because the angel praised her so. She did not consider herself worthy of such great praise.

But the angel reassured her, and said: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace before God. Thou wilt become the mother of a son. Thou shalt give Him the name of Jesus. He will be the Son of the Most High; that is to say, the Son of God Himself." Now, hear what Mary said. Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to Thy word." You know

these words, too, do you not, dear children? What angel did God send into the world? Where did He send him to? How did the Angel Gabriel salute Mary? And what did Mary answer? The angel had also said that she would bring forth a son, and whose was He to be? What did the angel say that she was to call the Son of God? Who, then, is the Son of God? *The Son of God is Jesus Christ.* Now, remember this: The Redeemer whom God sent into the world is not a man only, but He is the Son of God Himself, and is called Jesus Christ.

After a time, Mary and Joseph traveled to another town, which is called Bethlehem. They arrived there late at night. There were just at that time a great many visitors at Bethlehem, and all the houses were occupied. For this reason, and because they were poor, no one would take them in for the night. They were obliged to enter a stable to sleep. In this wretched place, in a stable, Mary brought forth a Son, as the angel had said she would. Poor Mary wrapped the infant in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in the manger, because there was no better place at hand. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into the world quite poor. Who of you can tell me where Jesus Christ came into the world? *Jesus Christ came into the world in a stable at Bethlehem.* Children, there must have been many rich and beautiful virgins living there. Why, therefore, did God choose Mary, who was poor, as the mother of His Son? God does not regard the beauty of the body, nor wealth, nor fine clothes. He looks only at the heart. Mary had the purest and the most innocent heart. She only willed what God willed. She said this: "I am the handmaid of the Lord." Now, what must a servant, or a handmaid do when she is told to do something? To obey God was Mary's will, and now the Redeemer comes into the world, and will the Redeemer make mankind happy or unhappy? Was Eve so obedient to God? And how are all the rest of mankind in this respect? Because Mary was so innocent, and so obedient, God chose her to become the mother of His Son. She was poor, but the holiest of virgins. Who was the mother of the Son of God? *Mary, the Blessed Virgin, was His Mother.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

70. Who is the Son of God? Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
71. Where did Jesus Christ come into the world? Jesus Christ came into the world in a stable at Bethlehem.

XXII.

The Child Jesus.

The Child Jesus was to have a foster-father, who would take care of Him. There lived at that time many kings, princes, and other prominent wealthy men. Did God choose one of these to be the foster-father of His Son? Why did He choose the poor carpenter Joseph? This poor carpenter was a righteous, Godfearing man; therefore, to him was given the great grace of being the foster-father of the Son of God. Who was the foster-father of Jesus? *St. Joseph was His foster-father.*

Tell me, dear children, what did God create in heaven out of love to mankind? And what did He create upon earth? And what other gifts have we received from God? And, now, dear children, God gives us His own beloved Son. Think of that! The most beloved that God has, He gives to us, His beloved Son, to make us good and blessed. Which is the greatest gift of God's: the sun, the moon, the stars, and the whole world, or the Child Jesus? Rejoice, therefore, dear children, at the birth of the Child Jesus, and always be very attentive when I tell you anything about Jesus Christ. If the Child Jesus had not come into the world, it would not have been so well with you, and many pleasures which you now have you would have been deprived of.

So that you may picture to yourselves how it looked in the stable at Bethlehem, when Jesus came into the world, I will show it to you in a picture.* Here you see the Child Jesus lying in the crib. Here kneels the child's foster-father, St. Joseph, and here is the mother of Jesus, Mary, the Blessed Virgin. N., show me the Child Jesus, St. Joseph, and our Blessed Lady. Are you pleased with this picture, children? Very well, then, I shall hang it up on the wall for you, and leave it there until you have looked at it thoroughly, and can tell who the persons are represented in it. That we may never forget that the heavenly Father gave us that which He held most dear, we Christians celebrate every year a festival, by which we remember with gratitude that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into the

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* To make the most important events in the life of Jesus Christ more perceptible to the minds of the children, it is advisable for the teacher to provide himself with pictures of these events, which the children will greatly enjoy.

world for love of us. This festival is called Christmas. It is in particular, a joyous day for the children. And so that you, too, dear children, may rejoice in the Infant Jesus, and love Him very tenderly, it is customary that because our heavenly Father has given us that most dear to Him, our parents give their children on this day all sorts of good things. The children take the greatest delight in the tree which is prepared for them on this day. Remember, children, why the tree is decorated for you. It is to remind you of your Father in heaven, and of His Son, Jesus Christ, that you may love them, and that your heart may be glad. God so loved mankind that He sent His only Son upon earth, so that Jesus might make all men good and happy.

Children, why do your parents give you a tree at Christmas? Of what should it remind you? Are you pleased to have a Christmas tree? Then I will tell you a story about a Christmas tree.

Christmas eve had come, and in all Christian families one saw everywhere preparations being made to observe the holy festival of Christmas with grateful hearts, and to welcome the birth of Jesus with glad rejoicings. So that the children might rejoice at the advent of the Son of God upon earth, and in this way have the love of Jesus implanted early in their young hearts, the good parents exerted themselves to give their children a beautifully decorated tree. And many a little tot would ask the mother, wonderingly: "Mamma, when is the Infant Jesus coming? will He be long arriving?" And then the mother answered: "Be good children, and then the Child Jesus will bring you very soon some beautiful presents." At these words the children were satisfied, and they strove with all their might to be very good for love of the Infant Jesus.

But in the home of a poor laborer who had died a few days before, there was no gladness. His three little children sat sadly round the table, for their father had just been buried. He had been so good to them, and worked hard to give them the necessaries of life, and sometimes he had been able to give them a childish treat. The mother, not knowing what she should do to feed the three little ones, cried bitterly when she looked at them. The expenses of the sickness had taken up all their scanty savings, and on this day above all others, the mother's heart was heavy, and she felt her poverty all the more that she was unable to give the children anything at this time of Christmas.

Rosie, the youngest girl, asked her mother, innocently, in her

childish way, whether the Infant Jesus was not coming to them. "Ask Him," she said, "to bring us something, too." How gladly would that mother have given a little pleasure to her children, but her poverty rendered this impossible. So as not to deprive them of their hope, she prayed with confidence to God, the Father of the widow and the orphan. The Infant Jesus will certainly not forget us, but, children, you must pray to Him for His gifts. Thereupon, little Rosie raised up her hands, and prayed with childlike devotion, in which the others joined her:

"O Infant Jesus, come to me,
And make a sweet, good girl of me;
Though small my heart, it longs for Thee;
Come live in it, it loves but Thee."

Children, how do you like little Rosie? Was she not a good little girl? Do you not wish to learn this little verse, too? I will repeat it to you several times. Now listen to what happened further. The mother said to her oldest child, a boy of about nine years, "Joseph, gather together all the pine wood which your father was going to sell before he was taken sick. Carry it into the town, and see if you can sell it; otherwise, ours will be a sad Christmas. But hurry, so as to get back before nightfall, and on the way say an 'Our Father,' that God may send you a purchaser."

Quickly and cheerfully the obedient boy gathered the pine wood together. The load was almost more than he could carry, but he made his way manfully to the town, which was only a short distance from the village. Arrived there, no one seemed inclined to buy his wood, and the poor boy was very sad as he offered it first to one, then to another, always in vain. "Ah!" he thought, "I shouldn't mind so much if it wasn't for mother. She would cry so if I came back without any money."

He tried his fortune in another way. He went from house to house, and asked at the door: "Do you want any pine wood? Please buy some of me." He found a few kind persons who did buy some, but the greater number ordered him away, and one person went so far as to call him a little tramp, which hurt poor little Joseph's feelings very much. It was getting dark now, and he had not yet sold all his wood. His heart was so heavy that the tears began to roll down his cheeks, and it was freezing so hard that he began to tremble with

the cold. In this sad state he looked pitifully up to heaven and breathed a prayer from the bottom of his heart: "O my God, dear Infant Jesus, send someone to buy up all my wood, so that I can get home before night." With that, he called at another house. How delighted and surprised he was to hear most beautiful music coming from one of the rooms. Without knowing how it happened, he approached the door, which was ajar. He looked in, and what a sight it was for the poor boy. In the middle of the room stood a handsome tree, on the branches of which many waxen lights were burning. Lovely rosy cheeked apples, gilded nuts, rich candies, and many other desirable things in which children delight, were hanging all over it. Children, what was the name of this tree? I will tell you next time how little Joseph got along, and what became of this Christmas tree.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

72. Who was the mother of the Son of God? Mary, the Blessed Virgin, was His mother.
73. Who was His foster-father? St. Joseph was His foster-father.

XXIII.

An Angel Announces to the Good Shepherds that Jesus Christ, as an Infant, is Lying in the Manger.

Children, I have already told you that all those good people who lived before the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into the world had a great desire, a great wish, for the Redeemer, that the wicked might become good, and not offend God any longer. There were many great and prominent people in that part of the country where Jesus was born, but they were not pious; on the contrary, they were wicked, therefore it was not revealed to them at first that the Son of God had come into the world.

Now, listen, and I will tell you to whom God revealed it first, that His Son had come into the world.

At Bethlehem there were a great many shepherds, who had many sheep, oxen, and other cattle to look after, and they lived upon the milk, wool, and the flesh of their flocks. In that country there were many wild animals, especially wolves. These animals approached the

flocks at night, and if they were not driven away or killed they pounced upon the sheep, carried them away in their jaws, and ate them.

There were many pious souls among these shepherds, who loved God and kept His commandments, and to them God announced first that His Son had come into the world. I will now tell you who announced it to them.

One night, some good shepherds were minding their flocks. All at once there stood before them an Angel, bright, and full of light. The Angel said: "I bring you tidings of great joy. To-day the Saviour came into the world—Christ, the Lord. You will find the Infant in a manger." The good shepherds were watching over their flocks by night so that they might not be injured by thieves or wild beasts. It was to these good shepherds in the fields that the birth of Jesus was first announced by an Angel. I ask you, then: "To whom was the birth of Jesus first announced?" You must answer: *"The birth of Jesus was first announced to the good shepherds in the field by an Angel."* I will repeat this to you several times: "To whom was the birth of Jesus first announced?"

I have already spoken to you, dear children, about Angels, when we learned something about the holy Guardian Angel. Do you wish to hear something more about the holy Angels? Well, then, pay attention!

The Angels, dear children, were created by God. The Angels are more important creatures than we are. God gave them a more exalted reason, and a more perfect will. Man can not see the Angels, for they are spirits. What is our soul? And what powers has God implanted in it? Have the Angels reason, and a free will, too? What difference is there between our reason and that of an Angel? Therefore, children, the Angels are higher spirits than our soul. You must remember this of the Angels. They are pure spirits.

Why did God create the Angels? That they might serve Him. They are, therefore, servants of God. What must a servant do when given orders by his master? Listen, children, what happened to the Angels.

Some of the Angels did not want to obey God any longer, and they revolted against Him. They wanted to be like unto God. Was this right? It was very wicked and ungrateful. God created them as exalted spirits; they were to dwell with Him in heaven, and now they were so disobedient. What does God do to the disobedient? That

is what He did to the disobedient Angels! He drove them out of heaven, and cast them into hell, and now they are devils. Children, never be disobedient to God. For if God did not spare the Angels who were pure spirits, but cast them into hell, we can not expect anything better if we are disobedient. Those Angels who remained faithful to God, and did not allow themselves to be seduced into disobedience, are still with God in heaven, and they are supremely happy, and blessed ministers of God. The reason why we should rejoice that there are Angels is because we know that they are our friends. Children, the dear Angels in heaven love us very much, and their greatest wish is that we may one day be with them in heaven. You want to go there, do you not, children? Why did God cast some of the Angels into hell? Never be disobedient to God, therefore, or else you will be punished in hell. What should you learn to do from the good Angels? To be obedient, do not forget this! If I ask you who are the Angels, you must answer: "*The Angels are pure spirits, ministers of God, and friends of man.*"

God has sent the Angels to men at different times. They had to tell man what God wished them to do. The Angels appeared in form of a beautiful youth, and proclaimed God's orders. What was the Angel called who brought the message to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she would become the mother of the Son of God? And who appeared to the shepherds on the plains? And what did the Angel say? This Angel not only appeared to the shepherds. Listen to what happened. Many, many other Angels came. They all praised God and sang. The beautiful song which the Angels sang at the birth of Jesus—this you must learn out of love for the holy Angels. They sang: "*Glory to God in the highest! and peace on earth to men of good will.*" I will repeat this for you several times.

Alas! men went so far as to worship idols. They did not adore God any more. What is the fourth commandment, children? If we must honor our fathers and mothers, so much the more must we honor God who is our Father in heaven! Therefore, the Angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest!" Do you wish, dear children, to do what the holy Angels want you to do—will you always honor God? Then take notice of what the Angels sang, secondly: "Peace on earth to men of good will." Always have a good will. Never will anything bad, only what God wills. And Jesus will help you to do this. Why did He come into the world? Always be good, willing, obedient children of God upon earth. This will certainly bring

you always peace, gladness, salvation, and blessing. And this is what you desire to obtain from God. What is the beautiful song called which the Angels sang at the birth of Christ?

The Angels returned again to heaven. The good shepherds, however, went to Bethlehem, and found the Infant Jesus in the manger, and Mary and Joseph beside it. They were full of joy, and praised and extolled God.

These shepherds must have been very upright, honest men; neither gold nor silver gave them pleasure, but they rejoiced because the Son of God had come down from heaven upon earth, so that man might one day go to Him in heaven. What did the shepherds do when they found the Infant Jesus in the manger? *The shepherds were full of joy, and they praised and extolled God.*

What glorious possessions, children, did we lose by sin? O rejoice, then, for the Son of God will help us to regain heaven; that is why He came from heaven upon earth, so that we might one day go to Him in heaven. Should we not be glad at this? What did we lose through the sin of our first parents? That is why we are so poor in everything that is good; we prefer to do wrong. But we must not be discouraged on that account, for who came down from heaven upon earth? Was the Son of God rich? He came into the world poor. He had no house, not even a cradle, where He could be laid. For love of us, children, Jesus came into the world poor, but He wishes to make us rich in all good gifts. And if through Him we become good men, and get to heaven one day, will that not be a matter for rejoicing? Be glad, then, with the shepherds and the Angels; praise and extol God. What should we do with the Angels and the shepherds? *We should rejoice, and praise and extol God.* This is what we should do, and this is what good men have always done. So that we may never forget to praise and extol God, we are reminded to do this thrice daily by the Angelus bell. Wherever you hear it, thank God, praise, and extol Him for having sent His Son down upon earth. You know how to say the Angelus? Let me hear it.

We should rejoice especially, dear children, at Christmas time. What do good children receive, then, from their parents and friends? Why? Do you remember something about the little story I told you last time? Who can tell me? Shall I go on with the story, and tell you how little Joseph got along? Pay attention, then!

Under the magnificent Christmas tree a beautiful little crib was

placed in which the Infant Jesus was represented, just as Mary and Joseph and the good shepherds adored Him. At this crib several children were kneeling beside their parents, and they sang that sweet Christmas hymn which I am sure you all know, beginning, *Adeste fideles,* " Come, all ye faithful," etc. After having sung this beautiful hymn, the devout family rose from their knees, and then for the first time they noticed the strange boy, who approached shyly and offered his wood for sale. The father, suspecting that great want alone could have driven this poor boy out of his home so late at night, made some inquiries about his circumstances. Meanwhile, the children had gathered round the poor boy, and felt very sorry for him, as he told their father, with tears in his eyes, that his father was dead, and that they were in great want.

" Then I will buy up all your wood, so that you can go home," said the mother, consolingly, and she took it from him, and went to fetch the money. At this kind reception, Joseph gained confidence, and was delighted. He looked around again at the lovely Christmas tree, and the crib, and at sight of them he could not refrain from saying aloud: " How beautiful it is! I never saw anything so beautiful before." The father asked him if he knew what it signified. " Oh, yes," answered Joseph, " that is the Infant Jesus; there is Mary and Joseph, and the good shepherds, with the Angels hovering in the air." When Joseph was asked if he knew the story which was here represented, he told them in a loud and clear voice the story of the birth of Christ. The parents and their children were very much pleased that Joseph knew his religion so well. It would be very nice if you too, children, could learn to tell that story. Will you do this? If you pay attention, you will find it easy enough. And to those who learn to say this little story first I will give a pretty picture representing the shepherds adoring Jesus.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

74. To whom was the birth of Jesus first announced? The birth of Jesus was announced first to the good shepherds on the plains.
75. Who announced it to them? An angel.
76. Who are the Angels? The Angels are pure spirits, ministers of God, and friends of man.
77. What beautiful song did the Angels sing at the birth of Jesus? They sang: " Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth to men of good will."
78. What did the shepherds do when they found the Infant Jesus in the manger? The shepherds were full of joy, and praised and extolled God.
79. Should we do as the shepherds and Angels did? Yes, we should rejoice, too, and praise and extol God.

XXIV.

Three Wise Men from the East, Called the Three Kings, Appeared Before the Infant Jesus, and Offered Him Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh.

You have found, dear children, by the story of the good shepherds, that even poor men, if they are good and upright, can be very happy and contented, for God loves them, and provides many joys for them. God loves the rich and mighty people, too, when they are pious and good, and especially when they are merciful and humble, and give gladly of their abundance and wealth to the poor and needy; then these rich people are very agreeable to God, and God provides many pleasures for them, too. To-day, dear children, I will speak to you about three pious, noble men who came to the Infant Jesus.

Look at this picture! You notice three men in handsome, costly garments. Each one has a crown upon his brow. High in the heavens there is a most beautiful, bright star. And below you see houses which represent the town of Bethlehem, where the Infant Jesus was. Shall I tell you the story which this picture represents? It is very beautiful and wonderful, so pay attention.

At the time that Jesus came into the world, there lived in the East three men who were very pious and good. They had a great many subjects, and they came of a noble race. That is why they are called the three holy kings, or three wise men of the East. To them there appeared a wonderfully bright star in the heavens, which they had never seen before. They wondered what this star meant. God gave them to understand that this star signified that the Redeemer or Saviour had now come into the world. They started out and took with them the most precious things they possessed as an offering to the Saviour whom they wished to adore. On the journey they followed the star, and it led them to the country of the Jews, where the child Jesus was. Now, children, when I ask, "Who led the three kings to the Infant Jesus?" you must answer, "*A beautiful bright star appeared in the heavens, and guided the three wise kings there.*" I will repeat this to you several times. Now, hear what the star did.

The star guided the three kings first of all to Jerusalem, which was the capital of Judea. Here Herod, the king of the Jews, lived. They asked him: "Where is the new-born king of the Jews? We have

seen His star in the East, and we have come to adore Him." But in Jerusalem no one knew anything about the birth of the Redeemer. They only knew that many, many years ago God had revealed to a pious man that the Redeemer would be born at Bethlehem. The three kings accordingly took the road to Bethlehem. Just as they were leaving the city of Jerusalem they saw the star in the heavens again, which stood directly over the way which led to Bethlehem, and they were filled with gladness. They followed the star, and all at once it stood still over a place, and in this place, children, over which the star stood motionless, there was the Infant Jesus. What happened to the star when it arrived at the place where the Infant was? *The star stood still over the place where the Infant was.* Repeat this again.

They entered into the place and found to their greatest joy the Infant Jesus, with Mary and Joseph. Although everything looked very poor, they believed that this Infant was the Redeemer of mankind, and they knelt before the Infant and presented Him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What did the three kings do when the star stood still? *They went in with joy, and knelt down before the Infant, and presented Him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* I will repeat this to you several times.

How good God is, dear children, to good men. He sends an Angel to the good shepherds to bring them the glad tidings that the Redeemer of the world has arrived. Through a star He leads the three kings to the Redeemer. Is this not wonderful? Now, I will explain to you what the presents mean which the three kings brought to the Infant Jesus. Do you see this yellow piece of money? This is a gold piece, children! Gold is the most valuable of all the pieces of money. If I have this gold piece changed I shall get a number of small silver coins for it. They presented, therefore, to the Infant Jesus, the very best metal that is used to make money. Why was this, dear children? Jesus is the Most High Lord of the world; therefore the very best belongs to Him.

Look at these yellowish particles. Children, this is incense. If incense is placed upon fire it makes a smoke which has a most agreeable smell. You have, of course, seen this in church. The altar boy holds up to the priest the censer, which contains some glowing embers. When the priest strews the incense upon the embers, the smoke rises up to heaven, and the whole church is filled with an agreeable odor. As incense is the most precious perfume, man offers it to God alone as a sacrifice. Now, children, why did the three kings

offer it to the Infant Jesus? Who is Jesus Christ? He is the Son of God, even God Himself. To Him, therefore, this is a becoming sacrifice. I can not show you any myrrh, children, but I will explain all about it to you. Myrrh is the sap of a tree. When man dies, his body decomposes. That is why he is laid in the grave. If we wish to preserve dead bodies, so as to prevent them from decomposing, we take myrrh, and with that dead bodies are embalmed, so that they may not decompose. Dear children, why did the three kings offer myrrh to Jesus? Jesus is not only God, He is also man. He had a human body, and a soul. He died for us, as you will hear later, but His body did not decompose as ours does. This was indicated by this offering. After the three kings had adored the Infant Jesus, and presented their offerings to Him, they returned to their home in the East.

Dear children, the three kings laid as an offering at the feet of Jesus the most precious things which this earth produces—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. If any one were to say to you, "Children, the Infant Jesus is in this or that house," would you not go there to see Him? And because Jesus came into the world so poor, would you not gladly make Him a present of something?

The Infant Jesus is no longer visible among us; for after Jesus redeemed mankind, He returned again to heaven. But Jesus knows all about us; He loves us, He cares for us, and looks down especially upon good children with the greatest pleasure. Now, children, if you had anything which would please the Infant Jesus, would you not gladly make him a present of it? Each one of you has something which would give the Infant Jesus much pleasure. Of course, you have neither gold, nor frankincense, nor myrrh. What do you think you could give to the Infant Jesus which would please Him more than all the gold in the world? Children, it is your heart. *Yes, a heart that is clean and pure as gold is dearer to Jesus than all the gold in the world.* What can we, then, give to Jesus which is dearer to Him than all the gold in the world? Will you give this offering to the Infant Jesus? Now, I will teach you what you must do if you wish to give your heart to Jesus.

Love dwells in the heart, dear children. If, then, you love Jesus with all your heart, and do good for love of Him, you must give your heart to the Infant Jesus. How can we give our heart to the Infant Jesus? *By loving Jesus with all our heart, and doing good for the love of Him.*

Children, give your hearts to the Infant Jesus, and promise Him that you will love Him with all your heart, and do good for the love of Him. You will promise this, will you not? But, children, sometimes our hearts love that which is wrong, and we desire to do it. Should we obey our heart, and do wrong? O not for worlds! Because those who do wrong because their heart wishes it, take their heart away from the Infant Jesus. And do you not know to whom they give it? Who tempted our first parents? The evil spirit wishes to tempt us, too. He excites our hearts to evil, and if we obey him we give our hearts to the devil, which is fearful to think of. And you would not wish to do this? Promise Jesus, therefore, every day anew, that you will love Him, and only desire and do that which is good. Now, before I tell you the last of the little story about that poor boy, you must tell me all about the good shepherds about whom poor little Joseph knew so well how to relate. And now, listen to what further happened.

After the boy had finished his story the father, who was well pleased with the boy's sincere honesty, said: "I am very glad to find that you are so well instructed. Love Jesus always, as the good shepherds did, and you will never be without peace, happiness, and blessing!" The mother paid him well for the wood, and gave him besides a large piece of meat, saying: "Take this to your mother, so that you may have a good dinner to-morrow." The father gave him a couple of crisp bills out of his pocket, and said: "Take this home with you; your mother will be able to make good use of it, and I want you to pray for me and mine." The proverb says, "Like parents, like children." Here was an instance of it, for without being asked to do so each of the children gave the poor boy a little present which they had just received for Christmas.

After thanking them all over and over again, Joseph started for home with his presents. As soon as he had left the little village and reached the open country, he looked up to heaven where so many thousands of stars were shining, and his heart overflowed with gratitude.

On reaching home, where his mother and sister anxiously awaited him, he was received with many joyful exclamations. Joseph related everything that had befallen him, and when he laid the beautiful presents on the table, and little Rosa saw the apples and nuts, she cried out, joyfully: "The Infant Jesus must have given you these!" Then the mother said: "Let us thank the Infant Jesus who moved

the hearts of those good people to take pity upon us in our want, but above all things let us thank Jesus that He came into the world for love of us, to help us to gain heaven, which without Him would have remained closed to us for all eternity!" Mother and children knelt down, and thanked God with grateful hearts.

Children, you, too, must love Jesus with all your hearts. Pray to Him and thank Him for all the good, and especially if you should ever be in want or misery do not forget Jesus. He will certainly help you as He helped these poor people. Will you promise me this? God grant you the grace to keep your promise!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

80. Who guided the three wise Kings to the Infant Jesus? A beautiful bright star led the three Kings there.
81. What happened to the star when it came to the place where Jesus was? Over the place where Jesus was the star stood still.
82. What did the three Kings do then? They went in rejoicing, and knelt down before the Infant, and offered Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
83. What should we give to the Infant Jesus which is dearer to Him than all the gold in the world? A heart that is clean and pure as gold is dearer to Jesus than all the gold in the world.
84. How can we give our hearts to the Infant Jesus? By loving Jesus with all our hearts.

XXV.

The Child Jesus the Most Beautiful Example for Children. Jesus the Most Pious Child in the World.

Dear children! God gave men to understand that Jesus was the divine child by the appearance of an Angel at His birth. God still further honored His Son by a star in the heavens. Men offered Him the most precious gifts. They gave Him gold as to the most high Lord, frankincense as to their God, and myrrh because He was our Saviour and Redeemer, who died upon the cross for mankind. Jesus Himself proved to men that He was more than man; that He was the Son of God, even God Himself. And this was revealed by Jesus more and more beautifully and distinctly.

Children, what happens when the sun sets? And what when it rises again? Now, I want you to take notice of this. The sun does not set and rise in a moment, but quite slowly. In the early morning,

before the sun rises, first comes the dawn and then the daylight. It becomes light, a glow appears in the heavens toward morning, but the sun is not yet seen. Later, when the day has begun, we can see the sun rise. You have all seen the beautiful sun in the heavens. Dear children, as the sun appears by degrees, and is visible to man, so did Jesus reveal Himself gradually, not all at once; it became more evident and plainer to men that He was the Son of God.

Whilst Jesus was a child, very few people knew that He was the Son of God; but Jesus grew up to be a youth, and when He was twelve years of age something took place which should interest children especially, and I will speak to you about it to-day.

Children, you all wish that God should love you very much, and that you may go to Him in heaven one day. Now, listen. What is the first quality which you must possess? You must, above all things, be pious children. What must you be? I will now explain to you what the child must do of whom we may be able to say, "That is a truly pious child."

I heard a mother say to her two children one day: "Children, hurry up, or you will be late for church." The children hurried away, and before they reached the church they met a man with a cage full of birds. Then the children said to one another: "We won't go to church, but we will look at these birds instead." And they did so. Were these pious children? Why not? Where does a pious child like especially to go? *A pious child must like to go to church.* Now, remember this! The child who does not like to go to church is not a pious child.

But there are children who go to church and yet they are not pious. Listen to this: A teacher once took a boy out of his seat in church, and made him kneel in the middle aisle. This was a great disgrace for the boy, and he cried, and was ashamed to lift up his head, and when he got home his father whipped him besides. Children, what do you think that boy had been doing? He had talked, laughed, and turned round and disturbed the other children in their devotions. May we do this in church? Why do we go to church? What must we do there? *Pray devoutly.* Now, pay attention to this. If you wish to be pious children, you must pray devoutly.

I once saw a well-dressed man enter a church. He looked all around, sat down for a few moments, and then went out again. Did this man pray devoutly? Certainly not. Can you, then, see whether any one prays devoutly or not? Yes, indeed; devotion can not be

hidden. What do pious people do with their hands when they pray? *They fold their hands together.* Now those who do not kneel down properly, and fold their hands in church, but who are inattentive and restless, such people are not pious. These people do not care to go to church, and when they do go once in a while they do not stay very long. They do not feel comfortable in church, because they are not pious.

So that all Christians, and especially the children, may have a model before their eyes as to how they should behave in church, the pictures of Angels are placed on the altars in our churches. Have you ever seen these? I will now explain to you the beautiful meaning of this. Some of these Angels are represented as if they were descending and ascending into heaven. When you see these pictures you should make the resolution to obey God as gladly as the Angels do, and always to do the will of God. Other Angels are represented adoring God. Some are lifting up their hands, others again have them crossed upon their breast, others adore God with outstretched arms; all of them bend the knee before God. Look frequently at these images, and then be as devout in church as these Angels are before the throne of God. You will be reminded to do this every time you look at the image of these praying Angels. What should a pious child imitate in the Angels? *To be as devout as an angel before the throne of God.* Yes, dear children, always be devout in church, and when you die you will join the holy Angels in heaven, there to adore God for all eternity. What, then, must that child do of whom we can say, "That is a pious child"? A pious child should like to go to church, should pray devoutly, with folded hands, and be filled with devotion like an Angel before the throne of God. *Such a pious child was the child Jesus.* Now listen to the story of the twelve-year-old Jesus.

The little Jesus, because He was the Son of God, was the most pious child in the world. When He was twelve years old, His parents took Him to the Temple. It was a long way to go. But He was very glad to go. You can well imagine that on the way He was quiet and modest, and so devout in the Temple that all the good, pious people were delighted thereat.

On the way home, however, His parents noticed all at once that He was no longer with them. They searched for Him for three long days. At last they found Him in the Temple. His mother said: "Son, why hast thou done this unto us? Behold, thy father and I

have sought thee sorrowing." But He answered, kindly: "Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" He was so glad to be in His Father's house; His greatest happiness was to do the will of God. And He grew in age, and in wisdom and grace before God and men.

This little story is so beautiful, and especially important for children, that I want you, dear children, to learn it, so that you, too, may become pious children like the child Jesus. Will you do this? I will first divide it into several short questions.

What kind of child was the little Jesus? The child Jesus was the most pious child upon earth. What happened when He was twelve years old? When He was twelve years old His parents took Him into the Temple. How was the way to the Temple? It was a long way there. Did Jesus go willingly or unwillingly? He was very glad to go with them. How should we imagine Jesus behaved on the way there? On the way He was quiet and modest. What did He do in the Temple? He was so devout in the Temple that all the good pious people were delighted.

What did His parents notice all at once on the way home? On the way home, His parents noticed all at once that He was no longer with them. What did they do then? They searched for Him for three long days. Did they find Him? At last they found Him in the Temple. What did Mary, His mother, say then? His mother said: "Son, why hast thou done this unto us. Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." What answer did Jesus make? He said, kindly: "Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" What should we understand by this answer? How glad He was to be in His Father's house. What was His greatest happiness? His greatest happiness was to do the will of God. As Jesus grew in years, what else did He become? As He grew in years, so did He increase in wisdom and grace before God and men.

Now we will divide the whole into three parts, and I will ask you three questions. What happened when Jesus was twelve years old? What did His parents notice on the way home? What do we understand by Jesus' answer? And now who can relate the story of the twelve-year-old child Jesus? Children, now I will tell you something about the Temple, where Jesus went as a twelve-year-old boy. This Temple was a beautiful large church in the land where Jesus lived. Children, you have often been to church? You did not have very far to go, but the child Jesus had to go a long and difficult way. Because

the little town of Nazareth, where Jesus, Mary, and Joseph lived, was many days' journey from the city of Jerusalem where the Temple was, and to make a journey of several days on foot is very hard for a twelve-year-old boy.

You will want to know how it was that Mary and Joseph lost the child Jesus. You must have often walked in a procession? Who walks first? Yes, the boys, then come the young and old men; after these come the girls; then the young and old women. And so it is, as a rule, with all pilgrimages: the young people walk together and pray, and so do the old people. This is how it was on this journey to Jerusalem. His parents thought that Jesus was returning with the young people of their acquaintance. But when they did not find the child when they rested for the night, they began to look for Him. Now, dear children, you must take particular notice of the answer which Jesus gave His mother. What did He say? He said: "Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Where had He been? To whom did this Temple belong? Whose Son did He call Himself? Who is His Father? Now, pay attention. Jesus is the Son of God, as He said Himself in the Temple which was His Father's house. And now, dear children, I have one request to make of you. Be as pious as the child Jesus was. Go gladly to church; pray always very devoutly, and when you pray fold your hands together, and be as devout as an Angel before the throne of God! Will you promise me this? You say "yes," but will you keep your promise? And now, perhaps, some of you will say the closing prayers without attention, with distractions, and without folding your hands together. O children, if I only knew how to make such bad children pious! I can only exhort you, beg of you, and, if necessary, punish you, and if then you do not obey, you will remain bad. Who can make the most wicked children good? We will pray to God for this, and when you say the "Our Father" for sinners, think particularly of those bad children among you; and so that God may grant our petition and make them good, we will take refuge with the Mother of God, and ask her to help us pray to Jesus, her Son. After saying the "Our Father," you should repeat three times: "Refuge of sinners, pray for us." What should you add to the "Our Father," and say it three times? Mary is the Mother of Jesus, and she sought three days sorrowfully for the child Jesus, until she found Him. Children, Mary is our mother, too. It would cause her the greatest sorrow

if any of us should be lost. We must, then, have the greatest confidence that she will pray unceasingly for wicked people before the throne of God, and that God will give them the grace of conversion, that they may become good men again.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

85. You wish to be good, pious children. Now what should a pious child do? A pious child should like to go to church, should pray devoutly, fold its hands, and be as devout as an Angel before the throne of God.
86. Who was a pious child like this? The Infant Jesus was. (Example.)

XXVI.

The Child Jesus Was Diligent and Zealous in All That Was Good. His Greatest Joy Was The Word of God.

Dear children, it is customary for the children to undergo an examination at the end of the school year. You will have to undergo an examination of this sort. The principals and teachers, parents and friends assemble to take part in it. Those children who shall be able to answer the questions asked satisfactorily, will be commended for their diligence, but those who can not answer correctly because they were not attentive in school, and were lazy at learning, will be reprimanded, and they will not be promoted. The diligent children who study well are glad at the examination; the lazy ones, however, are troubled and afraid because they know that they will get a failure. So that none of you may fare badly at the examination, what must you do all the year round? Yes, you must be very diligent, children; and now I will tell you what a child must do who wishes to be in reality a diligent child.

Are those children diligent who pay no attention in school, who do not learn, talk, laugh, and are ill-behaved generally? Avoid all this, then, and learn willingly in school. This is the first thing a child must do who wishes to be diligent. What must a diligent child do at school? *A diligent child must learn willingly.*

Children, it ought to be your greatest delight to learn willingly, for studying will make you every day wiser, and it is of the greatest importance, as you will presently see. Are you not pleased to hear a story? The stories which I tell you are taken mostly from books

which I read first, and then I relate them to you. Now, if I could not read, should I be able to tell you these little stories? Where do we learn to read? Now, study diligently, so that you may soon know how to read, then you will be able to provide for yourselves many a pleasant hour in your lives by reading interesting books. What do we do with the pen? Do you wish to learn how to write? To be able to write is very good and useful. When you grow up, you will not always be able to stay at home; many of you will, perhaps, have to go many miles from home. If you should want anything, or desire to ask your parents something, you would be unable to go home and make your request. But if you have learned how to write, you can take a sheet of note-paper and write a letter to your parents which will soon reach them. Is this not very useful? Take pains, therefore, that you may learn how to write.

How many fingers have I on this hand? and on this? and on both hands? Well, you know how to count already. Now, pay attention when you are learning arithmetic, for it is a good and useful thing when children can figure well. And there are, dear children, many things which you will have to learn in your youth. Will you be good, diligent children?

Children, what good and useful arrangement has God made for our bodies? Did God give us eyes, ears, mouth, hands, and feet that we should do wrong with them? Unfortunate, then, are children who misuse these beautiful gifts of God; who, when there is anything bad to be seen, are all curiosity. They even run there eagerly, laughing and shouting. Not long ago I heard a great noise of many children's voices. When I looked around for the cause, I saw to my distress that a crowd of children were running after a drunken man. They teased him, and then he swore horribly. They were delighted, and clapped their hands. Were these children zealous for good or bad? If a man had passed through the streets praying devoutly aloud, these bad children would not certainly have taken the trouble to follow him and be glad at his piety. Children, keep away from everything that is bad! Those children who are zealous for that which is wrong are not good, diligent children, but they are idle and deficient in everything good. In what must a child's zeal consist if we would say, "That is a diligent child"? *It must be zealous in everything that is good.* Be, therefore, good, diligent children!

I come so often to you in Sunday-school. Of whom do I speak and teach you about always? This instruction is called, therefore,

the Word of God. For the words which I speak to you are not my words: they are God's words. God has spoken to men from time to time. He has told them what they must believe and do, and I announce these words to you again. If God had not spoken to men, if He had not told them who He was, and what was His will that they should do, then we would know little, perhaps nothing, of God, and that would be very sad indeed, would it not? Without the Word of God men would have certainly become more and more wicked, and how does God punish the wicked? Dear children, you will never suffer this punishment if you listen attentively to the Word of God, and if you obey what is said to you. Will you do this?

You have all said "yes," but I am sorry to say that I have already found out that many of you do not mean it, because when I have spoken to you about God I have noticed that some of you are very inattentive, and take no interest in what I am saying. It makes me feel sad, that you are not all diligent children. In what should a diligent child take the greatest pleasure? *It should take the greatest pleasure in the Word of God.* It must be a great pleasure to you. Of what use is it if a man is very learned, and knows the name of everything in creation, and knows nothing about God? If he does not know what he must do to be a real good man in this world, so as to go after death to God in heaven? Take, therefore, the greatest pleasure in the Word of God! Now, who can tell me what a child should do to be called diligent?

Dear children, in this, too, the child Jesus has given you the most beautiful example. Now pay great attention to what I am going to tell you about Him, so that you may be able to repeat it to me afterwards!

The child Jesus was diligent and zealous in all that was good. He took the greatest pleasure in the Word of God. He went gladly to the temple. On His way to and from the temple He was a model for every child by His retirement and modesty. In church He remained so long in prayer, and prayed so devoutly, that everybody was edified, and the people said to one another: "O how devoutly and diligently the child Jesus prays!" In the church He sat among the teachers. He listened to them attentively. He asked them questions, and gave them the right answers to their questions. Teachers and people alike were astonished at His wisdom, for they did not know that He was the Son of God.

I will divide all this into several questions. The child Jesus was not only pious, what else was He? *The child Jesus was diligent and*

zealous in all that was good. In what did He take the greatest pleasure? He took the greatest pleasure in the Word of God. How often did He go to church? He went to church daily. How did He behave on the way there? He was so retired and modest that He was a model for all children. How did He pray in church? In church He prayed so much and so devoutly that everybody was edified. What did the people say to one another? "O how devoutly and diligently the child Jesus prays!" Where did He sit in church? In church He sat among the teachers. What did He do among the teachers? He listened to them attentively, and questioned them. When the teachers asked Him a question, what kind of answer did He always give them? He gave the right answer to every one of their questions. Did this not astonish the teachers and people? The teachers and people were astonished at His wisdom, for they did not know that He was the Son of God. Who can recite this all nicely to me?

So that you may be convinced of how necessary it is to take the greatest pleasure in the Word of God, to hear it gladly, and to obey it, I will tell you another little story.

The children of a well-to-do man lived with their mother in the country. The father, however, on account of his business, was obliged to remain in the city. The mother frequently spoke to the children of their father's goodness and kindness, which it always delighted the children to hear about.

From time to time the father sent a messenger to them with all kinds of beautiful presents, and he told them how much their father loved them all, and that he would soon send for them to join him in the city, where they would remain with him always, and enjoy themselves very much. "But this could only take place," the messenger said, "if they were very good and pious children." He warned them to be very careful of a man who lived in their neighborhood, and who was an enemy of their father and of his children. The children promised faithfully to be very good, and to obey his words.

One day they were all playing in the garden, when a beautiful butterfly flew past. Its colors were so gorgeous that the children thought they had never seen anything so lovely in their lives before. "I must catch it," said the eldest boy, and he took off his hat and tried to catch it. The butterfly, however, flew from flower to flower without his being able to catch it, and finally it flew away over

the garden gate. Their mother had forbidden the children, as the father's messenger had also done, to go outside the garden walls, that they might not fall into the hands of that bad man. The boy had forgotten all about this warning, in chasing the butterfly. Farther and farther flew the butterfly, the boy in pursuit all the time. Suddenly there sprang out of the bushes a wild-looking man, who caught the boy by the arm, gagged him, and led him into the forest, where he was obliged to serve him, and was abused and maltreated.

While he was enduring so many cruelties in his bondage, there arrived one day a magnificent coach to fetch the mother and children, and take them to the father in the city. What a joy and pleasure it was to see the father, and to be able to live with him. The unfortunate boy, who, through his disobedience, had fallen into the hands of that bad man, was unfortunately not able to go to the father, but had to suffer in his misery, because the bad man would not release him. Why, children, did this misfortune happen to this boy? Be careful that the same does not happen to you! Have we not, all of us, the best and kindest of fathers, and where does this Father dwell? Has not your mother often spoken to you about your Father in heaven? He has sent you a messenger, too: I am he; for He has sent me to you to tell you what you should do. I must warn you particularly of a bad enemy—of the devil—who wishes to get you in his power, and to make you miserable for all eternity. Do you wish to be as unfortunate as this boy was? Take warning, then, and listen to the Word of God, which I announce to you, with the greatest pleasure, and obey it. Then, if you are good children, our Father in heaven will take you out of this life one day, and you shall go to Him in heaven, and dwell with Him in everlasting happiness. But those who do not like to hear the Word of God, and to obey it, into whose hands will they fall? And where will the devil lead them? Will they never be able to leave hell again? Take notice, then, that "Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and obey it; but wretched forever are the damned who would not hear and obey it."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

87. What should a diligent child do? A diligent child should learn willingly, be zealous in everything good, and take the greatest pleasure in the Word of God.

88. Who was a diligent child like this? The Infant Jesus was. (Example.)

XXVII.

The Child Jesus was Good and Kind Toward All Men.

Dear children, there are times when the sky is covered with clouds for many days in succession; then again, at other times, the sky is quite clear and bright, and its beautiful blue is not covered by a single cloud; now which of these times do you like best, when the sky is threatening or when it is clear? Now, both of these conditions are to be found in men. For instance, there are people who most of the time make a disagreeable, unpleasant face, as if they were at odds with all the world. No matter what you do for such people, you can never please them, and it is very hard to get on with them. But, again, there are others who are always kind and pleasant; you can notice it at once in their face that they are well disposed toward you; would you not much rather associate with these kind of people than with those who are disagreeable and unkind? Children, you must accustom yourselves to do those things which please you in others, and that which displeases you in others you must avoid, and break yourselves of the habit. You have said that kind people pleased you very much, and that you did not care for the company of disagreeable ones. What kind of children do you intend to be in the future? I will teach you now what things a friendly child should do. In passing along the streets I have often noticed that some children, as soon as they see me, run away; but others, on the contrary, greet me kindly. Now which of these children are friendly, those who run shyly away or those who greet me nicely and politely? Children, you should not only greet me, but every one whom you know, in a friendly manner, and when any one greets you, you should thank him kindly. Now, what should a child do so that every one may be able to say, "That is a friendly child?" *A friendly child must be good and kind to everybody.* You can tell a kind child by its face—it always looks friendly. Children, I do not wish to see any disagreeable, sullen faces among you, for if you are like that as children, how will you look when you are grown up? And why should you not be always cheerful and kind. Does not Almighty God, your parents, teachers, and friends have charge of you, and do they not give you many pleasures? It would, therefore, be very ungrateful if you repaid them with discontent and unkindness. You can tell a kind child not only

by its looks, but also by its words. What does a friendly child do when you meet it in the street? It greets you pleasantly. But there are other children who say nothing; they seem to be dumb. This is wrong. If you wish to be considered nicely behaved children, you must always be kind and greet everybody pleasantly.

But, dear children, many a one looks pleasant and greets one kindly, who at the same time does not mean it, and at heart has evil thoughts, full of hatred and enmity, is such a person good and kind? The serpent spoke pleasantly to Eve in Paradise; he asked her why God had forbidden them to eat of all the trees, and when Eve answered: "We may eat of all the trees in the garden except of that one in the middle. God said to us: 'If you eat thereof you shall surely die.'" "Oh, no," said the serpent, "you would not die. God knows that very well! As soon as you eat of it your eyes will really be opened. You will be like unto God, and know good and evil." Children, was it true what the serpent said? This is just how the devil acts nowadays when he wishes to tempt men to be wicked. A child, for instance, in entering a store, is tempted to steal the fruit which it sees exposed for sale. The devil says pleasantly: "Why don't you take one? Nobody is looking. You would like so much to have one, and you will enjoy it!" Is this the truth? Oh, no. On the contrary, if that child obeys the flattering liar and steals, it will be punished. How? At least with remorse and suffering, which always follows sin. If it should be found out, then comes the shame and the consequent punishment, and if it does not do better, even the punishment of hell. Be warned, dear children, against the wicked tempter. Do not listen to him, no matter how agreeable his speech may be. Listen to this story: Cain one day was particularly kind to his brother Abel. "Come," he said to him, "let us go together into the fields." The good Abel went with him. Now, when Cain was far enough away from his parents, he seized hold of Abel and slew him. Was not this a most deceitful, false friendliness? O children, I have already warned you, but I must repeat it—never be false! Speak only according to the feelings of your heart! Have you ever looked in a mirror! When you do what kind of a picture do you see there? Your face, do you not? If you look pleasant you see a pleasant picture there, but if you are sullen looking the image reflected in the mirror is sullen too. Your face should always be the mirror of your soul; one ought to be able to recognize at once what your thoughts are. If you are sad your expression also will

be sad; if you are light-hearted your face should be joyous and bright. Never be false and deceitful! Now, remember how a kindly child ought to be. *It should be honest and sincere toward every one.* Was the serpent honest and sincere? Was Cain? Do you wish to resemble them? How should a kindly child behave toward every one? Children, occasions will present themselves when you will be able to show kindness and give assistance to other people; you should be particularly kind to the poor, the sick, to the aged and the unfortunate. If Jesus Himself were to come to you poor, sick, full of trouble and sorrow, would you not gladly help Him? Listen to what Jesus says on this subject! He said: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it unto me." The least kindness which we show to the most abject of human beings Jesus accepts it as if it had been shown to Himself. And, furthermore, He has promised that He will give us a glorious reward in heaven. Do you wish to obtain one day a glorious reward? What, then, must you do to everybody? *You must show kindness to everybody.* This is the third thing that a child should do, that people may be able to say, "That is a good child."

The child Jesus was good and kind toward everybody. His lips only uttered the truth. It was impossible for Him to dissemble. He was sincere with everybody. All the children and their parents loved Him, and were afraid to displease Him. Whenever He met people He was always kind to them, and assisted and helped them in every possible way. Every day He was more and more beloved, and people rejoiced if they could only see Him.

I am going to tell you now a story about a young girl whose kindness and gentle manners will please you very much, and which was abundantly rewarded.

Outside a certain old town there was a well where the maidens from the town came every evening to draw water. A traveler had arrived at the well from a long distance, bringing with him several camels. While the stranger was at the well Rebecca, a maiden from the town, came there to fetch water. She filled her pitcher. Then the stranger approached her and said, "Give me to drink out of your pitcher?" She answered, "Drink!" and kindly offered him her pitcher. Then she said, "I will also draw water for your camels." The stranger was so pleased with Rebecca's kindness that he gave her golden earrings and bracelets. When Rebecca went home and related what had happened to her, and her brother, who was called

Laban, saw the golden bracelets which Rebecca wore, he went out hurriedly to the man at the well and said to him: "O thou blessed of the Lord, why dost thou remain out here? Come in at once. I have put the house in order, and made room for the camels as well." He led the man into the house, unloaded the camels, and gave them straw and feed. Children, this brother and sister were both very kind and hospitable toward a stranger. Did Rebecca know that the man would reward her so handsomely? Why was Laban so officious and kind all at once. What did he see? And what did he hope to obtain? Now, which pleases you the most: when some one does a kindness out of good will toward another, or when it is done for the sake of the reward? Be good at heart and kind toward everybody; always be honest and sincere and show the greatest kindness, whether you may expect to be rewarded or not. Your reward in heaven will be the greater, therefore.

XXVIII.

The Child Jesus was Very Obedient and He was Subject to His Parents.

I.

Dear children, tell me some of the benefits which we have received from God. If, then, all things come from God who is our greatest benefactor? God created the grain, and every year He permits as much to grow as is necessary for man's sustenance, but men must also do something that they may receive the gifts of God. Does God let the grain grow without man's assistance, as, for instance, He lets the grass grow? What are the things that man must do to obtain the grain from God? Children, could you do this work—plow and sow and do whatever else is necessary? Who performs this work for you? If God had not given you parents who could prepare God's benefits for you? Would you be able to live? Certainly not! Imagine a little child who can neither speak nor walk, that can not even eat anything unless the mother attends to it and places the food in its mouth; without this care it would soon die of hunger. Who is our greatest benefactor upon earth? And from whom, after God, do we receive the greatest good? That you may understand

this thoroughly, we will mention a few of God's benefits which your parents help you to procure. Tell me, N—, who had this dress made for you? And who bought the shoes for you which you wear upon your feet? Tell me, N—, who cooks the dinner and places it on the table when you go home at noon? Tell me, N—, when it storms and rains, where do the children like to run to? And to whom does the home belong? Who provides the children with a dwelling? When a child is sick where is it put? Who bought the bed and arranged it there? And if the sick child wants anything, for whom does it call? Does the mother come, then, and take care of it? When you want anything, to whom do you go to obtain it? If you had no parents would you not be very unfortunate?

Your parents, children, have charge of your souls, too. Before you came to Sunday-school you knew something about God. Who told you about Him? Who taught you to make the sign of the cross, to fold your hands and to pray? Who exhorts you to be good children at home? What do parents do to naughty children? Why do they punish them; what must they become thereby? Who sends you to church and to school, where you are taught and learn to be good? Your parents, dear children, must love you very much because they are so good to you. Do you suppose that all these things are easy for your parents to do? Your parents must give themselves a great deal of trouble to provide you with all those things which are necessary for you. Parents look upon their children with pleasure; it is a delight to father and mother to see their children around them. When the parents see that a child is sad or has been crying, do they not ask the cause of it? Yes, they ask the child at once, what is the matter, or what it wants; and if it is anything that it ought to have, and the parents are able to give it, they do so. Now, if parents do everything in their power to make their children happy, is it right for children to neglect their parents and not to care for them? Is that behaving like an obedient child?

Even the animals, who have no understanding, are grateful to man when they are treated kindly. Look at a dog, how he notices his master's will; he knows directly, at one glance from his master's eye, what he has to do, and he obeys promptly. It is too bad that children should let themselves be put to shame by an animal; that they should not mind their parents who are so good to them. Do you want to be ungrateful children? Be mindful of your parents, then; pay attention to their wishes. Are they obedient children who do

everything to please their parents? *An obedient child should do everything in its power to please its parents.*

I have said that your parents have to work very hard to earn everything that is necessary for their children. Children, although you are young, still you have hands; for what purpose has God given you hands? You must accustom yourselves to work while you are young. Children who do not like to work in their youth, but prefer to be idle, do not as a rule want to work when they are older. And what have we said about idleness? Shun idleness, therefore, and work willingly! You can not do very much, but you can help your parents and thereby make their work lighter. Will you do this? How unpleasant it is when you have to force a child to work. Whenever you can help either father or mother, do so cheerfully, for then only may you be called an obedient child! What, then, should an obedient child do? *Help with the work.*

* I will tell you what good advice a mother once gave to her little girl as to how children should behave to their parents.

Little Agnes was sitting with her mother one day under the trees in the garden, when suddenly a pigeon flew down in front of them. Both were startled for a moment. But they soon discovered that the bird, which had probably been chased by some mischievous boys, was quite exhausted and hardly able to move. The bird, which was a beautiful snow-white pigeon, had taken refuge behind the little girl, and Agnes had no difficulty in catching it. "Oh, how its heart does beat," said Agnes, "and it looks at me with its pretty eyes, as if it would say, 'Do not harm me!' No, dear little pigeon, I will not hurt you. You have not flown to me in vain. I will take care of you."

The mother praised Agnes for the kindness which she had shown to the poor pigeon, and said: "We must never repulse the unfortunate who take refuge with us. We should be kind to all those who are in want, and be gentle even to animals. Take the pigeon into the house and feed it." Agnes' mother had a pretty little cage made for the pigeon, which Agnes placed in the corner of her room. The pigeon soon knew Agnes very well and made itself quite at home. As soon as Agnes opened the cage door the pigeon would fly out and pick up the corn which she held in her hand.

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* At the end of Lesson 29 will be found a little story for boys which may be used in place of, or along with, the above.

Children, would you not be pleased to have such a pretty, tame pigeon? Agnes was delighted with hers. One day, as she sat sewing at the open window, and the pigeon was picking up some crumbs from the floor, it suddenly flew out of the window and settled on a neighboring roof. Agnes was frightened, and she called to her mother, who came in and asked her what had happened. "O my pigeon," said Agnes, crying, and she pointed with her finger to the roof, where the pigeon was sitting. "Call it," said her mother. Agnes did so, and in a moment the pigeon flew down and rested on her outstretched hand. Agnes was delighted at such prompt obedience. But her mother said to her: "I see how pleased you are that your pigeon was so obedient; mind, and always be as obedient to me as the pigeon was to you. I shall then be even more delighted than you are now. Will you give me this pleasure, dear child?" Agnes promised that she would, and she kept her word. She became one of the most obedient little girls. Children, will you promise, too, to be very obedient children? Keep your word, as little Agnes did. Now, listen further to what happened.

Agnes once made a little journey with her mother and she enjoyed herself very much. When she returned in the evening the pigeon flew to meet her, and showed a visible pleasure at her return. The servant told her that the pigeon had missed her, and had looked for her everywhere. "It is surprising how such a little bird should recognize its mistress and be so devoted to her." "Certainly," said Agnes. "It is very grateful for the corn which I give it every day." Then her mother said: "Are you also as grateful as that? I took you out and you have enjoyed yourself so much to-day, and yet you have not thought of thanking me for it. Don't let a little bird put you to shame, but always be loving and grateful toward your parents." Agnes had not thought this time of thanking her mother for the enjoyable day she had passed. Henceforth she was loving and grateful toward her parents. When she wanted anything she always said: "Dear father, dear mother, please may I have this or that?" She was thankful for everything she received, and after saying grace and thanking God she always kissed her parents after every meal. Dear children, does little Agnes' behavior please you? If so, then imitate it. Always be loving and grateful to your parents, for this is the third thing which an obedient child should do: *It should be loving and grateful toward its parents.* Now, who can tell me those things which an obedient child should be?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

89. What are the things which a good child should do? A good child should be good and kind toward every one; it should be honest and sincere, and show love and kindness to everybody.

90. Who was such a good child? The child Jesus was good and kind to all men.

XXIX.

The Child Jesus was Very Obedient and He was Subject to His Parents.

II.

Children, God has promised to obedient children that they shall have a long life, and that they shall be prosperous here upon earth. The fourth commandment says: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee." Dear children, always do everything that you can to please your parents; help them willingly at their work and always be loving and grateful toward them. You will thereby render your parents happy, and God will grant you a long life and prosperity here upon earth. Now, listen how the child Jesus behaved toward His parents and what a beautiful example He gave.

The child Jesus was very obedient, although He was the Son of God. He did everything He possibly could to please His Mother. He faithfully helped his foster-father, who was a carpenter, at his work. He was full of love and gratitude toward His parents, and He was subject to them in all things. I will repeat this to you once more, and then I will divide it into several questions. What was the fourth beautiful attribute of the child Jesus? The child Jesus was very obedient, although He was the Son of God. When He noticed that anything pleased His Mother what did He do? He did everything that He possibly could to please His Mother. His foster-father was a carpenter and had to work very hard. Did Jesus help him? How did He behave toward His parents? He was full of love and gratitude toward His parents, and He was subject to them in all things. Who can repeat this now?

O children, if Jesus has set you this beautiful example of obedience to your parents in vain, if instead of imitating Him you should be disobedient to your parents—which God forbid!—and lazy at work, unkind and ungrateful, contradictory and stubborn toward them, then you will make them infinitely unhappy. Now listen what bad children deserve. Holy Scripture says: "The eye that looks with contempt upon his father, and mocks at his mother, deserves to be plucked out by the ravens at the brook, and to be devoured by the young eagles." This is the chastisement with which God threatens those children who are disobedient and wicked toward their parents. Ah, how many children have already met this punishment! As a rule, all thieves, robbers, and murderers were disobedient, bad children in their youth, who would not obey their parents and teachers, but became worse and worse, until they suffered the well-merited chastisement. O children, obey the fourth commandment; if you obey it God will give you long life and prosperity, but if you do not obey it you can only expect the most severe punishment. What do you want to receive from God? What must you do, then? What does the fourth commandment say? What should an obedient child always do? Will you do this? By so doing you will please God, your parents, teachers, and all good people, and you yourselves will live happy and contented. May God grant it!

Now, children, you have heard the most important events in the childhood of the child Jesus. I will now show you a picture, and I hope you will all know what it represents. Who is this in the middle? Yes, it is the child Jesus in the Temple. What kind of men are those in whose midst we find the child Jesus? And here you see a father and a mother who are looking for some one. Who are they? One of you must relate clearly and distinctly the story which this picture represents. I will let this picture hang here for awhile, so that when you look at it you may make the firm resolution to become like the child Jesus. I shall watch your behavior, particularly in church, and I hope that you will do everything that is expected of a pious child. I shall ask the teachers now and again which children are diligent and which are idle in the class. I shall find out whether you are kind or naughty at your play. When I see your parents I shall ask them whether you are good, obedient children. I shall be much pleased if I find that you have done as I have taught you to do, and I shall certainly give you some little pleasure in return. But should I learn, to my great sorrow, that you

do not behave like the child Jesus, but are naughty and sinful, then what shall I do with such children? O children, I do not like to punish you. Be therefore pious, industrious, good, obedient children for the love of your Father in heaven, for the love of Jesus, and for the sake of your parents, teachers and everybody; then you will always be happy in this world, and one day you will rejoice eternally in heaven.

FOR BOYS THE FOLLOWING LITTLE STORY MAY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THE STORY OF THE PIGEON.

On a beautiful autumn day, at the time of the potato harvest, a father with his two boys started to work. The father dug the potatoes out of the ground, and the boys had to gather them up and put them in a sack. But they were so idle and negligent at this work that they would not have picked up the half of them if their father had not continually admonished them to be more attentive. They made their father so angry by their continuous negligence that he began to scold them soundly.

Presently a hunter approached them who was looking for partridges. His dog sought them eagerly in the fields and bushes, and at a whistle from his master he would go right and left, back and forth; all at once he stood still. His master cried out, "Mind!" Then he walked toward the dog and cried, "Forward!" At that the dog chased a number of birds out of the bushes, of which his master shot two. The dog seized the partridges in his mouth and brought them to his master, who called to him, "Come here, come here at once."

The father and his two boys had watched the sport with great interest, and as the hunter passed them the father could not help expressing his admiration. "One would really think," he said, "that that dog had reason, he understands so exactly every sign and he pays such attention to every order, and obeys so promptly. I am really surprised, sir, at what you have been able to teach that dog."

At this the sportsman, who had heard the father scolding, and who recognized the boys, said: "You are surprised how any one can make an unreasoning animal, who has no understanding, so obedient, but I am still more surprised that your children, who have reason and understanding, can not be made to obey your every word.

If I had to scold my dog as much as you have to scold your children I should have very poor sport. I will show you something which, as it makes unreasoning animals obedient, will also be useful to make disobedient children obey." He produced a dogwhip from his hunting bag and started to give the idle boys a good whipping with it, until they cried aloud: "O please stop! we will be obedient and industrious!"

They had to promise their father that they would keep their word for the future. "And if they do not do it," said the hunter, "give them the whip, for there is nothing better or more useful for disobedient children, as the saying goes: 'Spare the rod, spoil the child.' But it is your duty, too, because a father who does not punish his children will be punished by God."

The two boys improved greatly, and if ever they showed signs of disobedience their father had only to say: "Have you forgotten what the hunter said?" And they immediately did as they were told. Such a salutary fear had been impressed upon them by that punishment.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

91. What is it that an obedient child should do? An obedient child should do everything possible to please its parents; it should help willingly with the work, and be filled with love and gratitude toward its parents.

92. Who was such an obedient child? The child Jesus was always obedient and subject to His parents in all things.

XXX.

The Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Dear children, when the birthday arrives of your father or mother, of a teacher, or any one else from whom you have received many kindnesses, what do good, grateful children generally do on these occasions? They wish their parents, teachers, benefactors happiness and blessing, prosperity and a long life. I have often known children on such a day to give a little present to their parents, which always affords them great pleasure. The present which pleased me most is a bouquet or a wreath of beautiful flowers, presented by the children to their parents with loving congratulations, and there-

by showing their love and gratitude toward them. Such grateful children please their parents and all good people, and they draw down God's blessing upon themselves. It is only in the fourth commandment that God has promised a reward in this life, in the words: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give you." But to whom do we owe the most thanks—to our parents and benefactors or to God? What did God do to make bad people good again? And remember that the Son of God came down from heaven for love of us, that He became man, and that He redeemed us, otherwise we should have all been lost. Should you not often thank Jesus for this? And how do we thank God for His benefactions? The Mother of God, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, has taught us a beautiful prayer which is especially agreeable to God and of great benefit to us. Do you wish to learn this beautiful prayer? I will teach you this prayer, so now pay attention!

I am always glad when I see a garden in which lovely flowers of different colors are blooming. Certainly a flower garden is something most lovely. Do you not like to see one, too? Now, every one has a favorite flower. Which do you like the best—and you—and you? I will tell you which flower is considered by everybody to be the most beautiful. It is the rose. The rose is not only beautiful to look at, on account of its beautiful coloring, but it has a most delightful perfume. This is why it is called the queen of flowers. I have told you what pleasure it gives to parents when the children bring them some beautiful flowers on their birthday and wish them every happiness. If our Saviour, Jesus Christ, was visible now among us, would you not like to offer Him, out of gratitude, some beautiful flowers? And because the rose is the most beautiful of all flowers, would you not like to give Him a wreath of roses? Children, the Mother of God has taught us a prayer which, because it is so beautiful and so pleasing to God, is called the rosary, and those who say it with devotion offer to God a more agreeable present than the most beautiful wreath of natural roses ever could be to Him. Now I will tell you what this prayer consists of. What is that which I am holding in my hand? Yes, it is called a rosary. Roses, dear children, are of different colors; there are white, red, and yellow ones. What color are the beads of this rosary? White is the color of innocence. Above all things, children should be as innocent and pure from every stain as is the color of the white rose. So, dear children

that you may be very careful of your innocence, and preserve the purity of your heart from every sin, the Mother of God has recommended us particularly, while saying the Rosary, to contemplate the life of Jesus, which was a source of such joy to herself when Jesus was a child. There are five events over which we should rejoice with Mary. I will explain these to you.

What do you see attached to this rosary? You are right; it is a cross. Children, if Jesus had not died for us upon the cross, and redeemed us, we could never have hoped to go to God in heaven. But the crucified Saviour is our hope, therefore we begin the prayers of the rosary with making the cross, as we can only hope to be heard through the crucified Jesus. How do we begin to say the rosary? Why? After we have made the sign of the cross, we say the Creed. After the cross you will notice a bead which is larger than the others; this means that after making the sign of the cross we should say the Creed. Children, we must first believe in God before we can pray to Him, for without faith it is impossible to adore God and to serve Him with our whole heart. You all know how to say the Apostles' Creed. After the Creed we say the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father, which asks for everything which we need for this life and the next, and if we pray fervently to God in the Our Father, He will give us everything that we need to be happy in this world, and to be blessed in the next. So that you may understand for what we are asking, say the Our Father slowly and distinctly, N. You hear that we pray: "Blessed be the name of God; may His kingdom come; may His will be done upon earth by men as it is done in heaven by the angels; may God give us our daily bread, that means food for our body and soul; may God forgive us our trespasses, meaning our sins; and we promise to forgive all those who trespass against us, that is, all those who have offended us; may God lead us not into temptation, and preserve us from all evil, especially from all sin." As you see, the Our Father contains everything that is necessary for the body and soul. Now will God give us all those things for which we ask Him in the Our Father?

In the rosary we say, after the Our Father, three Hail Marys. That is why there are three small beads.

Why, children, do we say the Hail Mary after the Our Father? Mary was the first to receive through Jesus Christ everything that we ask for in the Our Father; we salute her, therefore, as the Angel

Gabriel did, and we hope, through the blessed fruit of her womb, through Jesus Christ, to obtain all these things, and that we may certainly obtain it we ask Mary that she may intercede for us with her divine son Jesus. We say the Hail Mary here three times, children. Why do we do this? To obtain from God the three divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Now we will try to say the rosary thus far. Begin, N—, to say the rosary. What comes after the sign of the cross, N—? When the Creed is said, what prayer do we say? After the Our Father say the three Hail Marys.

What you have heard so far, dear children, is the beginning of the rosary, and now listen how the rosary itself is said. If I hold the cross and the beads, the meaning of which I have just explained to you, in my closed hand, the remaining part forms a wreath consisting of five large and fifty small beads. The five large beads denote the five Our Fathers and the fifty small ones denote the fifty Hail Marys, which constitute the rosary. The whole, dear children, is divided into five parts. First of all, you see, there is a large bead—that is an Our Father; then comes ten small beads, which are Hail Marys, and this is repeated five times.

The Blessed Virgin Mary has taught us that every time we pronounce the name of Jesus in the Hail Mary we should contemplate an event in the childhood of Jesus, which pleased her particularly, and which should make us glad, too. Over which event did the Most Blessed Virgin Mary rejoice, first of all? It is when she conceived of the Holy Ghost Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. O children, we should also rejoice fervently at this, for if Mary had not conceived Jesus of the Holy Ghost, we should have had no Redeemer, and we should be the most miserable of creatures.

After the first ten Hail Marys there is another Our Father, as the second large bead shows. After the second Our Father there are again ten Hail Marys, and at the word "Jesus" we must remember another event in the life of Jesus which was a cause of rejoicing to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I will first of all enumerate these events to you, dear children. Mary had a cousin, who was called Elizabeth, and who was exceedingly pious and God-fearing. After Mary had conceived of the Holy Ghost she could not keep this inexpressible joy within her own heart. She went at once to carry the glad tidings to her cousin Elizabeth, although for this purpose she had to undertake a long and difficult journey, which took three days, and the way led over the mountains. O children, God had prepared another joy

for the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. Elizabeth was enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and she knew, although no one had told her, that Mary had become the Mother of the Redeemer. She greeted the Blessed Virgin with the utmost joy and reverence. "Thou are blessed among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord." When Mary heard herself called the Mother of the Lord for the first time, and when she was called blessed, her joy was at its height. She began to thank God aloud, to praise and magnify Him. Children, we must be very cold-hearted if we do not experience great joy in contemplating this story. We have now contemplated two of these joyful events, the Annunciation and the Visitation. The three others are: The Nativity of our Blessed Lord, the Presentation, and the Finding of Jesus in the Temple. I shall explain the three last ones more fully in our next lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

93. What are the five joyful mysteries of the Rosary called?

I. The Annunciation.
II. The Visitation.
III. The Nativity of our Blessed Lord.
IV. The Presentation.
V. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple.

XXXI.

The Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

In our last lesson we considered two of the joyful events remembered in saying the rosary, the Annunciation and the Visitation. The next event, dear children, which we should contemplate with joyful gratitude in saying the rosary, is already known to you: it is the birth of Jesus. Where was Jesus born? Who was His mother? What did the angels do at the birth of Jesus? What did the shepherds do? Dear children, we should be very ungrateful if we did not feel the liveliest joy in contemplating the birth of Jesus. Why

did the Son of God come into the world? He wished to redeem us all and make us good again and blessed; can there be a greater benefit? Mary and Joseph, the good shepherds, and the angels of heaven were full of joy and gladness when Jesus was born. Let us rejoice with them, especially when we say this mystery of the rosary.

We come now to the fourth part of the rosary, which also consists of one Our Father and ten Hail Marys. So that you may be able to understand this mystery I will relate to you briefly what is meant by the presentation in the temple: In the Old Law God commanded the Israelites, through Moses, that all parents should offer their first-born son to God in the temple. The wealthy people had also to offer a lamb, the poor a pair of doves. Although Mary, as the Mother of God, was not obliged to conform to this custom, yet she did so. The first place she went to after the birth of her Son was the temple, where she offered up to the Father in heaven His only begotten Son. With what holy joy must she have returned thanks to God for the grace of being the Mother of God!

Mary, as you know, was poor; for this reason she brought the offering of the poor, and gave a pair of young doves, like the poorest of the Israelites.

There lived at Jerusalem a venerable old man called Simeon, who was very righteous and God-fearing. He waited with longing for the Redeemer of mankind.

While Mary and Joseph were waiting with the Child in the temple, Simeon, inspired by the Holy Ghost, came there too. When he entered the temple and beheld the Child Jesus, inspired by the Holy Ghost, he immediately recognized Him as the future Redeemer. With a great joy, as if he beheld heaven opened, he took the Child in his arms and cried aloud: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people of Israel." This, dear children, is what happened when Mary presented the Child Jesus in the temple, and this event is remembered in the fourth mystery.

Now we come to the fifth and last part of the rosary, which also consists of one Our Father and ten Hail Marys. The event which we should meditate with joy in this part is known to you. It is the story of the twelve-year-old Child Jesus. Who can tell me something

about it? What caused Mary and Joseph so much joy when Jesus was twelve years old? That they found Jesus in the temple!

Dear children, how do you like the prayers of the rosary? It is composed of the most beautiful and holy prayers, the sign of the cross, an Our Father, the three divine virtues, of five Our Fathers, and after each of these ten Hail Marys. Will you always say your rosary with devotion? As long as you remain humble Jesus and His holy Mother will love you, and you will certainly be able to say your rosary with pleasure and devotion; but now I must tell you something which has unfortunately happened to many persons, and made them very unhappy. There are, dear children, many Christians who as children said their rosary joyfully and devoutly, but when they grew older they became lukewarm in prayer and the love of God, and because the rosary took time to say they became tired of it, because they did not pray to God fervently, and they went so far as not to say their rosary any more; they even forgot it. Others, again, did worse: they associated with persons who ridiculed religion, and especially the rosary, and because they thought more of these wicked persons than they did of God they laid aside their rosary altogether, and at last they, too, laughed at those who practised this beautiful devotion. Dear children, when you grow older you may perhaps meet wicked persons like these, but you must never so offend Jesus, your Saviour, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, as to despise a prayer which the Mother of God herself has taught us, or laugh and mock at those who do say this prayer. This would be a great misfortune for you which might deprive you of heaven itself.

I will tell you in a few words how persons have been punished on account of their pride and haughtiness. On occasion of the birthday of a certain girl, named Cecilia, her parents and brothers and sisters congratulated her, and she received many beautiful presents. Her grandmother gave her a bouquet of white roses and a string of pearls, saying, kindly, "My dear grandchild, may these pearls be an emblem of thy innocence." Cecilia looked contemptuously at the present, and said to herself: "I expected something better than that from grandmother; flowers don't cost much, and these pearls are so cheap-looking."

She took the present and gave it to her little sister, saying, with a sneer: "Julia, this will suit you better than me. I don't care for it, but for a child like you it is a grand present."

The grandmother said: "Cecilia is right. The present is more suitable for an unassuming child than for a haughty, capricious young lady. The pearls which Cecilia does not appreciate, and which she has given away, are real and they cost a hundred dollars. Cecilia, who did not consider this present good enough, has punished herself by her pride and selfishness. But you, dear little Julia, remain always humble and modest, preserve your heart pure from all evil, that it may resemble these white roses. Be virtuous, and do all the good you can in your life, which is of more value than pearls and gold, then you will one day receive from God the crown of everlasting life.

Children, this is what happens also to proud persons who despise the rosary and think that it is only fit for children and ignorant people. These persons do not obtain from God the graces and blessings which He gives to those who say these prayers devoutly. It is a mystery to ignorant and proud people how Christians can find any pleasure in saying these prayers. To say the rosary with joy and pleasure is a gift of God, and this gift is given by God to the humble.

The five joyful mysteries are, indeed, mysteries, and remain such, to the proud, because they have not received grace from God to comprehend how joyful these events are to every Christian heart when meditating upon them devoutly.

There is one thing I want you to do, dear children, and that is to say your rosary devoutly and without distractions. Your mind must know what you are praying, and you must desire ardently in your hearts for those things which are expressed in the words, otherwise you will resemble a bell which emits sound without knowing it.

Now, dear children, I am going to give a rosary of pretty beads like these you see here to each one of those who can tell me how to say the rosary.

XXXII.

Jesus Christ is the Best Teacher for Children.

Dear children, you have heard the most important events of the childhood of Jesus; but I am sure you would like to know more

about Jesus Christ the Son of God. From His twelfth year until His thirtieth we only know that Jesus retired from the world and lived with His parents, and that He was subject to them. In this respect Jesus has given a beautiful example to all children as to how gladly children should remain with their parents and be obedient and subject to them in all things. But, dear children, Jesus could not always remain with His parents. Why did God, His Father, send Him into the world? If Jesus had not become incarnate to save the sinful, would they have become good again? What people are sinful when they are born? Were we, too, sinful when we were born? Children, what must you do to reach heaven? Remember, then, that you know what Jesus did to make the sinful good again.

I have often known persons, who were very wicked, to fall sick, to come near death in fact. Their relations said to them: "You are grievously sick, you will probably die; prepare yourself for death, therefore!" They would not believe it, however, until they were assured that only by a miracle could they get better. As soon as the sick persons realized this they did everything in their power, that they might die a good death. Children, most people were grievously sick in their souls at the time when Jesus lived upon earth, and, what was the worst of all, they did not believe that their souls were sick. Do you know what makes the soul sick, and causes its eternal death? It is sin which deprives men of eternal life in heaven and casts them into the eternal death of hell. Men were great sinners, but they did not acknowledge it. They made gods out of wood and stone and adored them; even the devil himself. They committed the greatest crimes and the most horrible vices, and did not consider them sins but good actions. As long as men do not think that they are sinners and wicked, will they ever do anything good and just? Certainly not, no more than sick people who believe they are well call in the doctor. Therefore, if the wicked were to become good again, they must first of all believe that they were wicked. For this purpose God sent His Son into the world, that He might tell this to men and teach them.

When Jesus was thirty years old He began to teach men. He went about in the country preaching penance; He admonished wicked men that they should leave off sinning and offending God, and that they should be converted and become His good children again.

I have already told you something about the beautiful temple in Jerusalem. As often as Jesus was in Jerusalem on the Sabbath or festival days He taught in the temple. When Jesus was in small cities He taught in the synagogues, which were small churches wherein the Jews assembled on the Sabbath for divine worship. In the country where Jesus lived there were large lakes. You have all seen a boat. Well, Jesus seated Himself in a boat, and from thence He taught the people who were on the shore. He taught them also from a mountain and in the desert. Wherever He met men who should hear the word of God He taught them. In this way Jesus had a great deal to endure, and He was often very tired, but what grieved Him most was that so many persons would not listen to His teaching and remained as wicked as ever. What did Jesus do when He was thirty years old? *When Jesus was thirty years old He began to teach men.*

Children, if one of you was to stand up here and teach the other pupils, would that be right? There would soon be the greatest disorder among you. Did any one command you children to teach? What must you do? Suppose one of the congregation should ascend the pulpit and begin to preach, would this be allowed? Oh, no; only those who are appointed as teachers and are called to this state ought to proclaim the word of God. Now listen and I will tell you who has appointed Jesus Christ to teach mankind and has commanded men to listen to Him. God Himself did this, and I will tell you where it happened.

Dear children, among those men who listened to the teaching of salvation from the lips of Jesus there were many who distinguished themselves by their zeal in listening to the divine word and in obeying it. These men were for the most part with Jesus, for which reason He called them His disciples. Upon one occasion He took His three favorite disciples, Peter, John, and James, with Him up into a very high mountain. When they had ascended the mountain Jesus prayed. All at once His appearance was changed—it was bright and shining. His countenance shone like the sun. His garments were as white as snow. And behold! two men appeared in glory and heavenly brightness, who talked to Him. They were Moses and Elias.

When Peter and the other two disciples saw Jesus in His glory between these two holy men they were filled with holy reverence. They were astonished and enraptured. When Peter saw that the

two men were about to leave Jesus, he said to Jesus: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

While Peter was yet speaking a bright cloud overshadowed them. Moses and Elias vanished in the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." God Himself, therefore, by a voice from heaven, appointed His beloved Son as the teacher of men, and commanded that we should hear Him. How did God Himself appoint Jesus, His beloved Son, as teacher of men? *A voice came from heaven, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."*

So that you may more easily remember the story of the transfiguration of Jesus I will show it to you in a little picture. Here you see Jesus represented in heavenly brightness and beauty. On His right is Moses, on His left Elias. Here on the mountain you see the three favorite disciples of Jesus, Peter, John, and James. Out of the cloud a voice spoke from heaven. What did this voice say? Now who can tell me what this picture represents, and the names of the three persons there depicted? Where did Jesus lead His three favorite disciples? What were their names? How did Jesus appear to them upon the mount? Who appeared and talked to Jesus? What did the voice from heaven say?

We must, therefore, hear Jesus, dear children. God has commanded this by a voice from heaven, and solemnly appointed Jesus as the teacher of all mankind. Can a child learn who is not attentive to what the teacher says? Certainly not; on the contrary, it will remain ignorant. O children, how much our Father in heaven must love us, that He should give us His beloved Son as a teacher. You should be glad because the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is your teacher too. He is the best teacher for children.

Dear children, are you as clever as your parents and other grown-up persons? The word of God is announced to grown people by preaching. Have you ever heard a sermon? Does the priest ask the congregation questions, as I do you? Children, that is not necessary, because grown people understand what is taught them perfectly well without questions and explanations. But with you, children, it is a different thing. That you may understand what is taught you it must be made clear and distinct, so that you can understand it with your weak reason. For this reason Jesus is the best

teacher for children, because what He teaches is so plain that even little children can understand it. Why, then, is Jesus the best teacher for children? *Because what He teaches is so plain that even little children can understand it.* Children, who is Jesus Christ? Where did Jesus come from? Have you ever been to heaven? You do not know, then, how it looks in the other world? Who can tell us this best? Yes, Jesus can tell us this, and He has done so. What He teaches is so beautiful that even little children are pleased, and that is why He is the best teacher for children. Why, then, do we say that Jesus is the best teacher for children? *What he teaches is so beautiful that it pleases even little children.*

After Jesus had taught men for three years everything that they should know, so that they might be holy in this world and blessed in the next, He returned to heaven again. But Jesus had provided that those men who were to live later should hear what He had taught. He said to His disciples and their successors: "Go and teach all nations, all people." The disciples and their successors have done this at all times. They taught men everything that Jesus had taught. Jesus sends me to you, dear children, to teach you all those things which He once taught when He lived visibly upon earth. When I am explaining to you His holy teaching you should listen as attentively as if you heard it from His own lips. Jesus Christ has promised a great reward to those who hear the Word of God and obey it. To them He has promised heaven and eternal blessedness. Listen where He said this: Jesus was teaching upon one occasion a great number of people, when a woman who took great delight in His teaching raised her voice and proclaimed the Mother of Jesus as blessed because she had such a Son. Then Jesus spoke those memorable words: "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." Dear children, do you wish to be with the blessed in heaven one day? What must you do to attain this? That you may do this, may God grant you His grace, which we will now beg of Him by a devout prayer.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

94. What did Jesus do when He was thirty years old? When Jesus was thirty years old He began to teach men.

95. How did God Himself proclaim Jesus to be His well-beloved Son and the teacher of men? A voice came from heaven and said: This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him!

96. Why is Jesus the best teacher for children? What He teaches is so plain that even children can understand it. It is so beautiful that it even pleases little children.

XXXIII.

Jesus Teaches How Much God Our Father in Heaven Loves Mankind.

Dear children, you have learned now many things about God, how He made all things, and arranged them beautifully and well, how He gives us so many good things, etc. But Jesus Christ has taught us all this much better and plainer. Children, is God also the Father of the wicked and of those who do not believe in Him? You did not think so. That is what a great many men thought: that God only cared for good men, that He only loved them as a Father, but that He hated the wicked and did not take care of them. But this is quite wrong, as Jesus has so well taught us. Who created all good men? Who created the wicked? If there were no sun in the sky, how would it be on earth? Who, then, allows the sun to rise every day? Does the sun shine only on the good, or does it shine on the wicked too? If it did not rain any more would anything grow upon earth? Who sends the rain? Does God let it rain upon the good and the just only, or also upon the wicked and unjust? Do you still think that God only cares for the good? You see, then, how plain and clear the teaching of Jesus is. Jesus taught that God was the best of Fathers to *all* men, let us therefore be good children of our Father in heaven, who lets His sun rise upon the good and the bad, upon the just and the unjust. Does God wish that men should be wicked? How does He wish all men to be? Be therefore good children of your heavenly Father, and if any of you are naughty you must improve at once and not offend this good Father in heaven again, for even the best of fathers must punish bad children if they do not improve. Is God only your Father, or mine? Yes, God is the Father of all men.

Your own fathers love you very much. You have proofs of their love daily in the many kindnesses which you receive from them. But who is the best Father from whom all good comes? Mention some of the benefits which we have received from our Father in

heaven? Now tell me what Jesus has taught about God His Father? *That God is the best of Fathers to all men, and that He loves them all tenderly.*

Good parents love nothing in the world so much after God as their children. If any one were to ask your parents either for their money, goods, or their children, which do you think it would be hardest for them to part with? Now I will tell you what Jesus Christ has taught us of the infinite love of God for mankind.

Dear children, God the Father had an only Son, who was with Him in His heavenly glory from all eternity. This only begotten Son of God had the same attributes as God the Father. How much the Father loved Him the Son of God Himself has taught us when He said: "I and my Father are one." I have already told you a great many things about this only begotten Son of God. Who is the Son of God? Yes, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. What did God say, by the voice from heaven, of this His Son? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now listen, children, what God the Father did with this His only beloved Son out of love for men who were wicked. You know, children, that all men who are descended from Adam and Eve come into the world sinful because they have inherited the sin of their first parents. God did everything to make wicked men good again. He tried to improve them by rewards and punishments. He sent from time to time holy men to them, who were appointed to preach penance to them, but they would not be better. Now listen what God at last did for love of mankind: *God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son.* Yes, the only begotten Son of God forsook the glory of heaven, became incarnate, and suffered, even dying the painful death of the cross to redeem men from sin and to make them blessed. O children, there could not be a greater love: the dearest that God had He gave to us. Never forget, therefore, what Jesus teaches us, whereby we can recognize how God loved the world.

Because all men were wicked when they came into the world they were told: "You are all lost because you are wicked, and the wicked go to hell." How sad this was! Children, when men die is that the end of them? Oh, no. After this life there is another life, which is eternal; the good go to heaven, the wicked go to hell. How are all men born into the world? Where ought they, in that state, go in the next life? Oh, how sad this would be if we should all be lost eternally! But this is not the case, for listen what Jesus has

taught: "God so loved the world that He gave us His only begotten Son." Why did God give His only begotten Son? *That all those who believe in Him should not be lost, but that they might have eternal life.* I will repeat this to you several times.

If we wish to be saved and to obtain eternal life we must believe what Jesus Christ has taught us. Do you know, children, everything that we must believe? You have often said the creed, and in this Apostles' Creed everything is contained briefly that we must believe, so that we may not be lost, but have eternal life. Now who can say the Apostles' Creed loudly and distinctly? Many of you have perhaps often said this Creed, but only with the lips, without thinking what the words mean which you speak. To pray with the lips only is not to pray well. We should think of what we are saying, we should be serious in praying. Now this is what you should think of when you say the Creed:

The first article of faith is: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." When you pronounce these words you must think over them in your heart and believe that God is our Father; an Almighty God who can do all things that He wills; the Creator of heaven and earth, who made heaven and earth and all things out of nothing. I have already told you many things about God the Father, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. What can you tell me about Him? (1. That He can do all things that He wills, etc., etc.) As often, then, as you say the words which compose the first article of faith, think of what they mean, and rejoice that you know that there is one God, who is our Father and the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth.

You know, too, what the second article of faith teaches us. It is: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord." Who is Jesus Christ? Yes, Jesus Christ is the only Son of God. Where did He come from? Who sent Him into the world? And why? If the Son of God, Jesus Christ, had not come into the world, then, children, we should have remained eternally in the power of satan; the devil would have been our master. But Jesus has overcome satan, and delivered us from his dominion; for this reason you should be especially glad to call Jesus Christ the Son of God your Lord, and to obey Him in all things. For we could not have been delivered from a more wicked master than the devil, and we could not have obtained a better master than Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son

of God. Remember this whenever you say the second article of the Creed!

The third article of faith is: "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary." This article of faith teaches us that the Son of God became man, and that Mary, the Blessed Virgin, was His Mother. Think of this in your heart, as often you have pronounced these words. Thank particularly the Son of God for His love in having left heaven to become man when you hear the Angelus ring, in which we say the same prayer as the third article of faith teaches. What prayers do we say at the Angelus? And where was the Son of God born? If He had not come into the world we should have all been lost. Dear children, should not those who think over the meaning of these words in their hearts always be glad as often as they pronounce them with their lips? They teach us that which is most important and most joyful for us. Will those be glad who pray only with their lips and do not think of what they are saying? Certainly not. Therefore you should always say the Apostles' Creed with attention and devotion, so that you may always know the truths better which it contains. In respect to the remaining articles of faith you will understand them better the more you pay attention, as I shall continue explaining the same.

In what is everything briefly contained which we must believe if we wish to obtain eternal life? *In the Apostles' Creed.* What is the Apostles' Creed? *I believe in God the Father,* etc.

The best beloved that God had, His only begotten Son, He gave, that all who should believe in Him might not be lost, but obtain eternal life. We will love God in return and believe all those things which He has taught and revealed to us by His Son.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

97. What did Jesus teach about God, His Father? That God was the best Father of all men, and that He loved them tenderly.

98. Whereby did Jesus teach us that God loved the world? God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for it, that those who believed in Him should not be lost, but have everlasting life.

99. Where is contained briefly what we must believe to obtain life everlasting? In the Apostles' Creed.

100. What is the Apostles' Creed? I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, etc., etc.

XXXIV.

Jesus Taught that He is the Good Shepherd and that We are His Sheep.

Dear children, you all know what sheep are, do you not? Sheep are very good and useful animals; they never harm any one and they give us the wool of which our clothes are made. In the country where Jesus lived there were a great many shepherds who possessed large flocks of sheep. It is a pretty sight to see a shepherd lead his flock to pasture. The shepherd goes ahead and the sheep follow after him. Do you think that sheep could get along without a shepherd? No, children, sheep without a shepherd would go to ruin. They would be without food, or water to slake their thirst. Who is it that leads the sheep to those places where they will find good food and fresh water? The shepherd, dear children, must do more than this for his sheep. If the sheep were out in the open fields in cold or stormy weather they would get sick. Where does the shepherd lead them, then? Yes, and in the sheepfold they are protected from wind and rain. But when the weather is fine the shepherd stays with his sheep all night in the meadows. If the shepherd did not watch over his sheep during the night what would become of them? Thieves would come and steal them; wolves and other wild animals would break in among them and devour them. Who protects them during the night from thieves and devouring animals? How necessary the shepherd is, then, to the sheep! But it happens sometimes that one of the sheep strays away from the flock and is lost in the forest, where it would perish miserably. But again there is the good shepherd, who seeks his lost sheep and brings it back to the flock. You see, dear children, that the sheep could not very well live without a shepherd. Neither can we live without Jesus Christ; on the contrary, without Him we should go to ruin, like sheep without a shepherd. Now listen to what Jesus has taught us about this:

As the Israelites were mostly shepherds, and had the beautiful custom of laying a sheep or a lamb upon the altar in the temple as a gift of sacrifice, Jesus gave them the following beautiful parable at one of the festivals in the temple: "I am the good shepherd," said He. "I know my sheep, and they know me. My sheep hear my

voice, and they obey it. A good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. I give them everlasting life. They shall not be eternally lost. No one shall take them away from me."

Dear children, who does Jesus say is the good shepherd? Yes, He Himself. And who, then, are His sheep? Children, we are His sheep. Jesus compares Himself to a good shepherd because He takes care of us, as a good shepherd does of his sheep. And He compares us to sheep because we should follow Him as the sheep do their shepherd. Now pay attention, so that you may understand this beautiful parable and learn to repeat it:

"I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and they know me." Children, do you know the Good Shepherd? Who, then, is Jesus Christ? Do you believe that He knows you? Oh, certainly. He sees all things; He hears and knows all things; He is the omniscient Son of God. What does Jesus say of Himself and His sheep? "I know my sheep, and they know me." He teaches further: "My sheep hear my voice, and follow me." What do the good sheep do when the shepherd calls them? I told you that in those countries where there are wolves and other wild animals a good shepherd must protect his sheep from them. This is often very difficult, because wolves are very powerful animals and could easily tear the strongest man to pieces and devour him. Yes, it has often happened that the wolves attacked the shepherd who defended his flock. Would it not be better for the shepherd to run away and save his life? What would become of the sheep if the shepherd was to run away when the wolf came? Would that be a good shepherd who would run away from the wolf?

Jesus has said of the good shepherd: "A good shepherd gives his life for his sheep." And this, dear children, is what Jesus did for us. Look at the crucifix! This Good Shepherd would rather give His life than that we, who are His sheep, should be given over to our enemies, the devil and the evil spirits. What, then, does a good shepherd do for his sheep?

Children, hear what Jesus teaches that the good shepherd gives to his sheep? He says: "I will give them everlasting life; they shall not be lost forever." Jesus has obtained heaven for us again; we shall not be lost eternally if we obey Him, like good sheep do their shepherd. Is not this joyful tidings for us? What glorious gift will Jesus, the Good Shepherd, give to us, His sheep?

Children, as wolves have great strength and can even kill the

shepherds, so has the devil, who waylays us as the wolf does the sheep, great strength and power; but we must not be afraid, because Jesus has far greater strength and power: He is the most powerful of all. I will first of all tell you the story of a shepherd boy who defended his sheep very courageously:

The shepherd boy David, of whom you will hear a great deal later, minded his father's sheep. A lion came and stole one of the sheep of the flock. He ran after the lion and caught him and took the sheep out of his jaws. And when the lion was about to attack him he seized him by the mane and strangled him. He did the same thing with a bear. Children, what do you think of this boy's courage? Would you dare to attack a lion or a bear? Now, I will tell you who gave this boy his courage. It was God who gave him courage; this boy loved God fervently and he knew and hoped that God could save him from the jaws of the lion and the bear. Although this shepherd boy was so pious, still he was only human. But who is Jesus, the Good Shepherd? Is Jesus more than man? Yes, He is God and man at the same time. Can the devil do anything to Jesus? For this reason He speaks of the power which He has to protect His sheep, thus: "No one can take them from me." What a happiness it is for us to know that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who takes care of us as the shepherd takes care of his sheep. This, then, is the glad tidings which Jesus Himself teaches us and that we should bear in mind. What did Jesus teach us? *That He would take care of us as a good shepherd of his sheep.*

But if we do not obey Jesus will He save us and make us happy? What, then, should we do as the sheep of the Good Shepherd? *We should hear His voice and obey Him.* Will you do this, children? Keep your word, so that you may not go astray, but obtain eternal life. Among the sheep there are very young little sheep. What are they called? Have you ever seen a little lamb? How did you like it? Does the good shepherd take care of the lambs too? Certainly; he has to take particular care of them, that nothing may happen to them. What must the lambs do when the good shepherd calls them? Now, remember this, that the lambs, by which all children are meant, must obey Him too. Do you wish to be as obedient as lambs to the Good Shepherd? Do this, otherwise you will be unhappy; you might even be lost eternally.

What, then, should you do, children, when you are warned of a danger, or if something is refused to you which you ought not to

have? Obey willingly, even if it is hard for you to do so, otherwise you might be very unhappy, and perhaps finally, through your disobedience, be eternally lost. How did you like this teaching of Jesus about the good shepherd? Here is a little picture in which you can see the Good Shepherd surrounded by His sheep. The one who can recite the beautiful parable of the Good Shepherd without a mistake shall have this picture as a reward.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

101. What did Jesus teach about Himself? That He takes care of men, like a good shepherd does of his sheep (parable).
102. And what should we do as sheep of this Good Shepherd? We should hear His voice and obey Him.

XXXV.

Jesus Teaches Us that He is the True Vine and that We are the Branches.

(*Show the children a branch of grapevine.*)

Dear children, what is this that I hold in my hand? Was it cut from an apple or pear tree? Children, this branch is cut from a grapevine. I suppose you have all seen a grapevine? It grows in many gardens. The vine bears beautiful bunches of blue and white grapes, which taste so delicious. You all know how grapes taste? Now, I will tell you something:

Several years ago I was traveling in a country where the grapevine is much cultivated. People who live there grow their vines by the thousands on the mountains and hills. They call this a vineyard. It was just at the time when the grapes were ripe and were being picked. The vineyards were crowded with people, young and old. Every one was rejoicing, because that year God had blessed the grape crop and had let a large quantity of beautiful grapes grow. I wanted to buy some of the beautiful grapes, but it was not necessary, because the people were glad to give me as many grapes as I could eat, and I was much pleased and grateful to get them.

Children, in a country like that, where there were a great many vineyards, Jesus lived too, and once He took occasion, in one of His sermons, to compare Himself to a vine and mankind to the branches thereof. Listen to this beautiful similitude of Jesus, who is the True Vine:

"I am the true vine," said Jesus, "you are the branches. The branch can not bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit. If any one remaineth not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire; and he burneth."

To what, then, has Jesus compared Himself and mankind? He said: *"I am the true vine, you are the branches."* And so it is, children, in fact and truth. Look at this branch of vine! Can it blossom and bear fruit? What is the matter with it? It has several buds where the seed of the blossom and fruit lies hidden. Would it not sprout leaves and blossoms in the spring? Children, this would be impossible, and why? Because I have cut this branch off the vine. It could not get any more sap from the vine, therefore it will wither and not bear any fruit. But if I had left this branch upon the vine, what would have grown upon it? The most delicious grapes.

What does Jesus wish to teach us by this comparison? *The branch can not bear fruit unless it remains on the vine, and we can not do any good unless we abide in Jesus, and He in us.* You must pay great attention to this, therefore I will repeat it to you several times. O children, there is no more beautiful sight than a vine whose branches are full of delicious grapes. Did you ever see one? Did you not like to look at it? Children, far more beautiful, inexpressibly beautiful, must be the sight of Jesus Christ, seated upon the throne of God in heaven, and with Him, like the branches of the vine, the good holy people who, like the branch of the vine, are rich in fruit, rich in virtues. Let us always remain united to Jesus in this world, for He says: "He who abides in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit."

Children, how can we abide in Jesus, and He in us? This may take place in a spiritual manner. What is your soul? What are the two chief powers given to it by God? What can we do with reason and what with free will? Children, if we strive with our understanding to know God and that which is good more and

more, and with our wills to love God and that which is good, as Jesus has taught us, then we are abiding in Jesus, and He in us. Which should give you the greatest pleasure, the knowledge of good or evil? Jesus also takes the greatest pleasure in the knowledge of good, and He helps us to know it. Which should you delight to do most, good or evil? Jesus, too, takes the greatest delight in doing good and He strengthens us to do it. If, then, we only like to do that which pleases Jesus most, if we wish and will, and do nothing but what Jesus wills, does the evil spirit abide in us? No; you can say of such a person that Jesus lives in him, and he lives in Jesus, for he will and does nothing but what Jesus wills. And how much good such a person can do all his life long! He is, in fact, like the branch of a vine which bears much fruit.

But now listen to what Jesus says of those who do not do this. This is what He teaches about them: "He who does not remain in me, shall be cast forth, and shall wither as a branch which does not remain on the vine. They shall gather him up and cast him into the fire, and he will be burned." Look at this branch of the grapevine, children! It will never bear fruit again, because it did not remain on the vine. It will wither, and will only be fit to burn. This is what will happen to those people who do not remain in Jesus.

Can we only discern the good with our understanding? That which is evil too; can you do evil, too, with your free will? Is there some one who incites people to do wrong and who tries all in his power to make them like the evil and do it? Does the devil mean as well by us as Jesus does? No; he wishes to separate us from Jesus. Now tell me, if a person obeys the devil, and would rather know the evil and do it, can you say of such a person that Jesus is in him, and he is in Jesus? Who has dominion over such a bad person? That is why we say of very bad men that they are possessed of the devil, and this is something awful. Where will God cast these wicked persons some day? Do they any longer resemble a branch which bears much fruit? From whom have they separated themselves? Whom have they driven out of their hearts? For this reason, children, they can not do any good, and they will be taken and cast into hell fire. So that you may be able to recite this beautiful parable, I will divide it into several questions: To what does Jesus compare Himself and mankind? What is it that a grapevine branch can not do of itself? What kind of people only can bear much fruit; that is to say, do a great deal of good? What happens to

those people who do not remain in Jesus, but who separate themselves from Him?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

103. To what has Jesus further compared Himself and men? He said: I am the true vine; you are the branches (parable).

104. What does Jesus wish to teach us by this parable? The branch can not bear fruit of itself; it must remain on the grapevine; neither can we do anything good unless we remain in Jesus, and He in us.

XXXVI.

Jesus Teaches How Much He Loves Mankind, and that They Should Love One Another.

Children, what did Jesus teach us concerning the love of God, and whereby can we recognize it best? "God then gave His only-begotten Son for love of mankind." And how do we know that God loved His Son exceedingly? To-day I will tell you what Jesus has taught about His love for men.

We know that the voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God the Father solemnly declared how much He loved His Son, Jesus Christ, and that He was well pleased with Him. Just as the heavenly Father loves His Son, Jesus teaches that thus He loves men. Listen to His own words. He says: "As my Father loves me, so do I love you." What great love the fathers of this earth have for their children, but infinitely more does God the Father love His Son, Jesus Christ. And this Son teaches us that He loves men as His Father loves Him. What, then, has Jesus taught us of His love for mankind? *As My Father loves Me, so do I love you.*

But Jesus has taught us in what way we could best know how much He loved them; and that you may understand this easily, I will first of all tell you a little story:

Several centuries ago, a number of Christians journeyed to the country where Jesus Christ lived and suffered. They visited the holy places where He was born, where He suffered, but especially the holy tomb in which His dead body reposed for three days.

These pilgrims had to endure many hardships and difficulties during the long journey. But they bore them gladly as a penance for their sins, and out of love and gratitude toward their Redeemer, and to implore His grace and blessing.

All at once they were seized by the Turks, the greatest enemies of the Christians in the Holy Land. They ill-treated the poor pilgrims in the most horrible manner. They robbed them of all they possessed, took them prisoners, led them into slavery where they had to undergo abuse and misery of every description, and often the most cruel of deaths.

A certain pilgrim was thus imprisoned. This man had left two sons at home whom he loved dearly, and they loved their father, too. When they received the sad tidings that their good father had been made a slave by the Turks, and was leading a miserable life, one of the sons took his whole fortune and offered it to the Turks by whom his father was held as a slave, that they might restore his freedom. But it was in vain. The more money he offered, the more the Turks demanded.

Then the other son journeyed to the place where his father was held as a slave, and begged the Turks to take him as a slave and set his father at liberty. As the father was feeble on account of the sufferings he had endured, and would probably soon die, and the son was a young, powerful man, the Turks agreed to this proposition. The father regained his freedom, the son became a slave. This good son spent a number of years in cruel slavery. Because he remained faithful to his belief, he had to undergo much ill-treatment at the hands of the Turks, and he bore this all cheerfully for the love of Jesus. At last the Turks caused him to be put to death in the most cruel manner. Children, which of these two sons had the greatest love for his father—the one who wished to give his fortune away to redeem his father, or the one who gave himself and his life, and thereby actually set the father free?

Yes, the one who gave himself, his life, loved his father the most. We have no greater possession in this world than our life. If we lose our life, then everything is at an end for us in this world.

How can we, therefore, recognize the great love of Jesus for mankind? Because Jesus gave up Himself, His life, for mankind. What does this crucifix represent? Where did Jesus Christ give up His life for us? From this we should understand His infinite love for us. This is what He Himself teaches: *Greater love than*

this no man hath, than that he give up his life for his friend. I will repeat this for you several times.

Who, does Jesus teach us, has the greatest love? Children, if any one was to tell you that you must die to-day, and give your life for your brother who had done wrong, would you find it easy to do? It is an awful thing to die: and to die upon the cross, above all things, what suffering that must cause! Did Jesus really love mankind so much that He gave His life for them? *Yes, He gave His life for mankind; He died for them upon the cross.*

I have known children who had very good parents, to fight one another, to scold and to strike one another. Now, when a father or mother observes such behavior on the part of their children, are they pleased at it? No, it causes them the greatest sorrow. Children, who is the father of us all? What do we call boys and girls who belong to one father? Right! They are called brothers and sisters. Now, as God is the father of us all, what are we to one another? Yes, brothers and sisters. Can it be pleasing to God when men who are His children hate and injure one another? For this reason did Jesus Christ, the Son of God, become man and our brother, so as to show us by His example how we ought to love one another. And listen, what a beautiful commandment He has given us! He said: *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I love you.* What is the commandment which Jesus has given us?

Dear children, if all men would keep this commandment of Jesus, it would be very different in this world. It would be heaven upon earth. Did Jesus ever offend anybody? If no one ever offended any one else, but be always charitable and kind, what would life be? It is man's own fault that it is not so. They do not obey the commandment of Jesus to love one another, as He loved them. Children, will you obey his commandment? I do not want to hear any more that some of you scold, push, strike, or hurt one another in any way. If you do you will not be disciples and favorites of Jesus, for the disciples of Jesus must love one another, as Jesus has told them: "Thereby will every one know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

I have spoken to you before about the disciples of Jesus, how willingly they listened to His teaching and obeyed it. St. John was the favorite disciple of Jesus. He had been Jesus' follower in his early youth, and he preserved the purity and innocence of his heart most carefully. In his old age he became so feeble that his disciples

had to carry him into the church. He could not preach any more. He exhorted the Christians briefly and beautifully to love one another. As often as he was brought among them, he used to repeat only these words: "Children, love one another." Now when his disciples and the assembled Christians always heard those same words, "Children, love one another," they became weary of it, and said: "Master, why dost thou always say the same thing?" Then St. John answered: "The reason why I exhort you so often to love one another, is because this is the Lord's commandment. And it is sufficient if you obey this commandment."

What were the words with which St. John in his old age exhorted the Christians? Is this not a very beautiful exhortation? Does it not please you, too, very much? Obey it, then, and it will be enough if you will only do this. Would any one injure another if he loved him very much? If, then, all men would obey this, there would be no more quarrels and dissensions, and how pleasant life would be!

Once upon a time there were two girls of about your age who were very fond of one another. Whenever they could they went to church and to school together. One day, as they were returning from school, they passed a garden, over the wall of which the branches of an apple tree were hanging, laden with ripe fruit. The wind swayed the branches, and a lovely apple fell down on the path where the two girls were walking. They both ran at the same time to pick it up. The girl who ran the quickest picked up the apple and kept it. The other girl wanted it, too, and then and there a quarrel arose between them. "I don't like you any more, and I sha'n't speak to you either unless you give me some of that apple," said one girl, and as the other one would not give her any they parted in anger. They did not speak to one another any longer, and as they formerly loved one another, they now began to hate each other.

Was this right, children? We should do good even to those who hurt and offend us. Remember this well, that Jesus particularly commanded us to love those who treated us badly, even to love our enemies. When any one offends you, you must not tell them that you do not like them any more, but you must forgive them from your heart. What prayer did I tell you that you should say every day for wicked men? Did you forget it? And those who forgot it should begin again to say this prayer. But I exhort you, above all things, little children, to love one another! I shall often ask whether

any of you have been unkind, or rude, or offending one another. What would such a child deserve? Would you not rather be rewarded?

So far I generally gave a little present to the one who was attentive and learned his catechism. For the future, I shall always ask a child who knows its lesson well whether it has been good of behavior, particularly whether it has been always kind to other children. If a child knows its lesson well, but yet is naughty and offends others, what does such a child merit? But when a child is not so bright and can not learn quickly, but is otherwise good and amiable with the other children, does not such a child deserve to be rewarded? And this is how I shall distribute the rewards for the future.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

105. What did Jesus teach about His love for us? "As My Father loves Me, so do I love you."
106. And who did He teach had the greatest love? "A greater love than this no man hath, that he giveth his life for his friend."
107. Did Jesus give His life for mankind? Yes; He gave His life for mankind, and died for them upon the cross.

XXXVII.

Jesus Teaches that Those Who Really Love Him Keep His Commandments.

Dear children, what did I tell you last time about Jesus, who is the best teacher for children? What did Jesus teach us about His love for mankind? And who, did He say, had the greatest love? Did Jesus also give His life for mankind? What commandment did He give us as to how we should love one another?

Your parents love you so dearly, and they show their love by all the good that they do to you. If a child should say to its father or mother, "I do not love you," would not this child be very wicked and ungrateful? But Jesus loves us far more than a father or mother love their child. What has He even given us out of love? If, then, we did not love Jesus in return, what should we be? Yes, we should be very ungrateful and unfeeling. If Jesus loved us so much as to give His life for us, what should we do? Will you love Jesus, who

is your best teacher? I will now tell you what Jesus has taught us to do to prove our love for Him. Jesus taught: "If you love me, keep my commandments. He who hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. He who doth not love me, keepeth not my commandments." So that you may understand the truth of this teaching of Jesus, I will make it plainer for you by a parable.

James and Annie were the children of very good parents. Annie, particularly, was a favorite with her father, for she was always telling him how much she loved him. The father had a most beautiful garden, in which there were a number of fine trees which bore fruit of different kinds. Among these trees there was a young apple tree which was in bloom for the first time, and promised to bear fruit. The children were delighted with this little tree, and when they used to stand beside their father, and notice with pleasure how the apples on the tree grew larger, their father promised them that if they strove to become as rich in virtue as that tree was rich in fruit, he would present them with the apples. Then he raised his finger warningly, and said: "Before these apples are ripe, and I shall be able to pick them, no one must shake any of them down. If you love me, you will obey me; but whoever disobeys, does not love me, and will grieve me very much." The children promised faithfully not to touch the fruit. One day Annie was alone in the garden and, full of curiosity, she went to look at the tree. The apples were beginning to turn red. She thought to herself: "They will certainly be ripe soon, and they must taste good." The more she looked at the fruit, the more appetizing it appeared to her. You can shake one apple down; father will not notice it, she said to herself. After looking around carefully to see that no one noticed her, she took a stick and knocked an apple down. At that moment her brother entered the garden, but before he could see her she had put the apple in her pocket, and moved away hastily from the tree.

At supper-time their father was very grave and depressed, and it was noticeable in his face that something must have happened that troubled him. At last he said to the children: "Which of you was in the garden to-day?" James answered that when he went into the garden he found Annie there. "Did either of you pick an apple from that little tree?" continued their father, "with the exception of you two, there was no one else in the garden at that time." James declared that he had not been near the tree all day. Now listen to what Annie did!

She pretended to be very sorry, and said, half crying: "Father, dear, I meant to tell you who it was that knocked the apple down, but I could not find you anywhere. As I was leaving the garden, I looked back and saw James take a stick and knock one of the apples down from the tree."

James cried bitterly at being thus falsely accused, and he said repeatedly: "No, I did not do it." The father had so much confidence in the lying little girl that he would not listen to James, but shut him up in a dark room where he spent the whole night in tears. The false Annie had not been able to eat the apple, because her brother had appeared just as she was concealing it. The next day was a Sunday. Her mother, in changing her dress, found the stolen apple in Annie's pocket. She took it to the father, who punished the deceitful girl with a good whipping, and then shut her up for three days and nights in the dark room where her innocent brother had been.

Children, which of these two children loved their father the best, James or Annie? Annie had so often assured her father how much she loved him, but was this true? If she had really loved her father, would she have disobeyed and offended him? That is why Jesus teaches, that those who really love Him keep His commandments. Pay great attention to these words, which say: *"If you love me, keep my commandments."* Now, what did Jesus teach us to do, if we wish to prove our love for Him? What is that commandment called in which He told us to love one another? Say the Ten Commandments. Now, dear children, I will tell you the great commandment of love, of which Jesus said that it contained all the others. It says: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.* I will repeat this to you several times. What, then, does the great commandment tell us to do?

Children, in what way did the father, of whose children I have just been telling you, know which of them really loved him? This is also what Jesus teaches, that those who love Him may be known by their obedience, and in the keeping of His commandments. His teaching says: *Whosoever hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.*

There are many persons who pray to God daily, and who declare in the most beautiful and touching words how much they love God.

They speak so beautifully about God that one would really think they love God above all things. And yet, dear children, very often these sort of persons do not love God. Their words are as false as those of the deceitful little Annie of whom I told you. In what way may we know these persons who do not love God? Jesus says: *He who loveth me not, keepeth not my commandments.* And so it is. Do you think that persons love you if they offend you daily, and only do that what displeases you? In the same way we can not believe those persons who do not keep His commandments, although they should repeat a thousand times that they love God.

Dear children, obedience is well rewarded in this world by parents, teachers, and friends, but infinitely more glorious will be the reward of those who keep the commandments of God, and thereby prove that they love Him. Children, which do you like best: when your parents and teachers are pleased with you, or when they are dissatisfied with you? And when will parents and teachers love their children, and be pleased with them? And so it is with God. Those persons who keep His commandments faithfully God loves and is pleased with them, and this is the first reward which they receive for their obedience. For Jesus teaches: *He that loveth me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him.* How happy those persons are who know that a king or some other prominent person loves them. But who is greater than all the kings of the world? And to know that God, the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, and His only begotten Son love us does this not make us happy and joyful? What love in return does Jesus promise those who love Him? You children require so many things which you are not able to obtain for yourselves. From whom do you get them? Whom do you ask when you want a dress, a book, or anything else? Now, if those two children, James and Annie, go to their father and ask him for something, which child do you think the father would sooner give it to, the disobedient Annie or the obedient James? And why is this? Children, so it is with God. Whence comes all that we are, and all that we have? What should we do when we want to obtain anything good from God? Does God grant the prayer of every one? Which is the happier, the one whose prayer is granted or the one whose prayer is not granted? Now listen what Jesus has promised those who keep His commandments. He says: *Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, that the Father will give you.* Children, what more do we want? If, therefore,

we keep the commandments of God, the Father in heaven will give us all those things for which we ask in the name of Jesus.

Tell me, N., what would you like best of all to ask the Father in heaven for? And what would you ask for, N.? And you, N.? O children, it was necessary for Jesus to teach us what we should ask for; unfortunately we do not know what is really best for us, and we should often ask for things which would harm us and be unprofitable. For instance, would it be a good thing for a child to ask the father for a sharp knife? What might happen to a child with a knife? Dear children, in order that we may not ask such foolish things of God, Jesus Christ has taught us what we should ask of God. "When you ask God for anything," said Jesus, "you should say: Our Father who art in heaven," etc. Who taught us to say that most beautiful of prayers which we call the Our Father? How, then, did Jesus teach us to pray to the Father? *Our Father, who art in heaven!* etc.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

108. What commandment did He give us as to how we should love one another? He said: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

109. What does Jesus wish us to do to prove that we really love Him? "If you love Me," He said, "keep My commandments."

110. What does the great commandment of love say? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

111. What does Jesus teach whereby we can recognize those that love Him? He said: "He who has My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me."

112. And whereby do we know those who do not love Him? "Whosoever loveth Me not, keepeth not my commandments."

113. What love does Jesus promise in return to those who love Him? "Whosoever loveth Me is loved by My Father, and I love him."

114. What does Jesus promise to him who prays to God? "Whatever he asketh the Father in My name, the Father will give him."

XXXVIII.

Explanation of the Our Father.

Now, dear children, in order that you may always say the Our Father, that most beautiful of all prayers, with devotion, and not only repeat it with the tongue, but understand and think about what

you are saying, I will explain this beautiful prayer to you. Now, pay attention! When praying Jesus taught us we should address the Father thus: *Our Father, who art in heaven.* So that we might have a childlike confidence in God, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, we may call Him Father. And so that we may look upon all mankind as the children of God, and love them as our brethren, we do not pray, "My Father," but "Our Father." Children, where do you want to go to after this life? Who dwells in heaven? Therefore, we should pray also, "who art in heaven," and lift up our hands and hearts to heaven. The first petition, dear children, says: *Hallowed be thy name.* Would it be right for any one to disgrace your parents, to defame their name? Good children desire, above all things, that their parents should be respected. If we really love our Father in heaven, we should, above all things, desire that He should be honored by all men; that every one should pronounce the sacred name of God with reverence, and they should endeavor, as obedient children, to further the glory of their Father in heaven. What is the first thing that we should pray for?

The second petition says: *Thy kingdom come.* By "kingdom," we understand the Holy Catholic Church upon earth and the kingdom of God in the other world—heaven. We pray God also, that the kingdom of God upon earth—the Holy Catholic Church—may be extended more and more, that all mankind may be converted to her, and that then they may obtain the kingdom of God in the other world—heaven. Children, if you did not belong to the Holy Catholic Church, would you not ardently desire to be received therein? There are many persons who do not know our Holy Church, nor the blessings which we obtain therein. Do you not wish that these persons should be converted, and that they might live and die in the Holy Catholic Church? Who alone can grant this grace to men? And we should pray to God fervently for this. But, if any one is a Catholic, and yet does not do what the Church teaches, can he go to the kingdom of God in the other world—heaven? Oh, no; if he leads a wicked and vicious life, he will go to hell, although he was a Catholic in this world. Mark this well! We should have the kingdom of heaven already within us. We should only desire what God wills, and then God reigns in our hearts, as He reigns in heaven, and then the kingdom of heaven, full of peace and happiness, is within us. And who can procure this for us? And that God may procure this for all men, how should we pray? When we

pray, "Thy kingdom come," what do we ask for those persons who have not yet the Catholic faith? What do we ask for ourselves and all Catholics? And what do we ask for after this life?

The third petition says: *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* Children, who are the angels? Where do the angels dwell. The angels, dear children, who dwell with God in heaven, have the greatest joy in doing the will of God. This is why they are called blessed servants of God. Where do we men live? Do we also know what God wills, and what He does not will? What does God will, and what does He not will? What do we prefer to do, the good or the bad? Why is this? If we do not accomplish the will of God upon earth, can we go to God and the holy angels in heaven? We know, dear children, that we are weak, frail men, who can not do the will of God, the good, of our own strength. But who can make weak men strong? We should ask God for this that He may give us the grace, that we only will what He wills, and always do His holy will, no matter how difficult it may be for us. Children, those who do not pray fervently for this, and do not say the third petition of the Our Father with devotion, alas! instead of doing good, and the will of God, they will do evil, which God abhors. Let us, then, do the will of God gladly and joyfully as the angels and saints do in heaven, and beg God frequently for His grace to this end. You will promise this, will you not?

The fourth petition says: *Give us this day our daily bread.* We require nourishment daily for our bodies. From whom does everything come which we enjoy? A good child asks its parents for everything that it wants. Jesus also has taught us that we should ask the Father in heaven, that He may give us every day what we require for the sustenance and preservation of the body. O children, there are times when God, to punish wicked men, did not let anything grow; when there was a famine, and men died of hunger. Therefore, pray, work, and have confidence in God, and you will never want for your daily bread.

Children, have we a body only? Does not the soul, which is a spirit, require spiritual food, too? The spiritual food of the soul is the Word of God. Those men, therefore, who hear the Word of God will be nourished and strengthened in the spirit. They learn to know God and to love him more and more. But those who do not hear the Word of God occupy their spirit generally with evil, and they are lost eternally. There is another food of the soul—a heav-

enly bread—which is Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist, about which you will be instructed when you are older and have more understanding. What do we ask for the body in the fourth petition? And what do we ask for the soul?

The fifth petition says: *And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us.* Children, when people contract debts, they must pay them, or they will be accused before a judge and punished. As often as we sin, we are in debt to God, whom we are not able to pay. Can we undo the offense to God, the wrong committed? All we can do is to beg the merciful God to forgive us our sins. In return, we promise to forgive our debtors; that is to say, to forgive from our hearts those who have offended us. Whom, then, should we forgive, if we hope to obtain from God the pardon of our sins? Be forgiving, then, dear children, and never bear ill-will in your hearts toward those who have offended you. Otherwise God will not forgive you your faults and sins.

The sixth petition says: *And lead us not into temptation.* Children, we have a great many enemies who wish to incite us to do wrong, and to make us unhappy for all eternity. You have often been urged by wicked persons, who taught you evil; by the flesh, when you have been tempted to do wrong; or by the devil, who suggested something wicked to you. That we may not be so unfortunate as to do wrong, we should, above all things, ask God fervently: "Lead us not into temptation!" May God preserve us from every inclination to sin. But, children, we can not be entirely delivered from temptation. We must be tried, whether we love God more than anything else in the world. When you are inclined to do wrong, dear children, do not forget God then. Say to yourself: "What! I should do wrong and offend God? No, I would rather die than sin! Help me, O God, in this temptation!" The thought of God and a short prayer will always preserve you from sin. You should be particularly careful that you do not fall into temptation through your own fault. When a good child knows that another child is naughty and teaches him wrong as often as they are together, if, nevertheless, he does not avoid him, it is very likely that the good child will be led astray, and at last become wicked. Whose fault is it if the good child becomes wicked? It is his own fault. What ought he to have done? Dear children, be on your guard whenever you are urged to do wrong and are tempted. Fly at once from those persons and places, and if you can

not avoid them, at least do not forget God, and implore His assistance. How did Jesus teach us to pray, that we might not fall into temptation?

The seventh petition says: *But deliver us from evil. Amen.* Children, you know the difference between good and evil? If you could choose between health and sickness, which would you choose? Why? Between joy and sorrow? Why? Between hard work and rest? Why? Dear children, you chose well between good and evil, but why did you always choose the good? Yes, indeed; we men would always prefer to have everything go well with us. God wishes this, too, but it can not always be. For when everything is well with mankind—if they are always in good health, happy, and comfortable—then they forget God only too soon, and fall into sin. Where will sinners go? Who is offended by sin? Is there a greater evil for mankind than sin? Who can preserve us from it? And what ought we to do if we wish God to preserve us from it? Yes, we should pray fervently to Him. And we should not only pray to be delivered from temporal evils, such as sickness and misery, poverty, trouble, and suffering, but we should pray to be delivered from temptation which would lead us into sin, for sin kills the soul as sickness kills the body. From what evils, then, should we ask God to deliver us in this petition? The word "Amen" means "So be it." It means that we hope, with joyful confidence, that God will give us everything asked for, according to His holy will.

XXXIX.

The Hail Mary.

I told you once about a child who had been promised a prayer-book by her father, but as she had been naughty she did not dare to ask her father to give it to her. So the child went to her mother, and because the mother interceded for her she really received it. Have we not a mother likewise in heaven? Who is this mother of ours? We should have recourse to Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, in all our difficulties, and ask her to help us pray to God, so that we may, through her intercession, obtain that which, on account of our unworthiness, we have not deserved. We turn, then, after having said the Our Father, to Mary, the Mother of God, and

ask her intercession, that we may obtain all those things which we have prayed for in the Our Father. This prayer, in which we call upon Mary to intercede for us, is called the angelical salutation, or the Hail Mary, which you all know how to say, and which we will repeat aloud now.

We salute Mary with the words of the angel Gabriel, and say: *Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee.* Mary is full of grace, for she was elevated to the highest grace, to be the Mother of the Son of God. Ought we not to rejoice as often as we pronounce these words, and be reminded of the joyful message which the angel brought? Rejoice, dear children, as often as you say these words, that the Son of God came into the world, and chose Mary to be His Mother.

We salute Mary also with the words with which her pious cousin, Elizabeth, saluted her. They are: *Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.* Mary is the most holy of women and virgins because she was chosen to become the Mother of the Son of God. For this reason we call her holy, and pray: "Blessed art thou among women." But we praise and bless above all Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour and Redeemer, to whom be adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for all eternity. We must adore Jesus as our Lord and God. Do we adore the Mother of God? Certainly not, children! We must worship God alone. We call upon the Blessed Virgin Mary to intercede for us with God, as you will presently see in the prayer which the Church has added to the salutation of the angel and of Elizabeth. The prayer of the Church says: *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.* We do not say "Holy Mary, we adore thee," but "pray for us." Whom only may we adore? We ask the intercession of the saints, too. Dear children, when you ask Holy Mary, Mother of God, to pray for you now, and at the hour of your death, remember always that we are exposed to many dangers of sinning, and have great confidence and real love for Mary, the Mother of God. She will certainly pray to her Son, Jesus, for us, so that we, like her, may be holy in this world, and blessed in heaven for all eternity.

Children, when your last hour comes, do you not wish to obtain from God a happy death? Have recourse to Mary, the Mother of God, and always say those words fervently: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

And now, dear children, you know how beautiful and how important the prayer is which Jesus Christ has taught us, and which, in consequence, is called the Lord's Prayer. But I should like to know now what you think we ought to do so as to obtain from God everything that is contained in the Our Father. Yes, we ought to say this prayer frequently, and always with great devotion. But this is not sufficient; more than this is expected of us. Do you think that God will grant the prayer of a person who leads a vicious life? Even if he prays often, and with great fervor? What else is necessary in order that his prayer should be granted? To live well and piously, and keep the commandments. If we do not do this God will not listen to us, no matter how often or how much we pray, even if we pray to Him with outstretched arms. But the prayer of pious persons, particularly of good, innocent children, pierces the clouds, and is pleasing to God. Do you wish to be good, pious children, and pray gladly to God? From whom does all good come? Do you wish to obtain good gifts from God your Father in heaven? What, then, should you do? Which prayer contains everything that we require for body and soul? Now, dear children, we will say this prayer devoutly. Lift up your hands and your hearts to God, and say the Lord's Prayer!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

115. How did Jesus teach us that we should pray to God? "Our Father who art in heaven," etc. (Repeat the Our Father and Hail Mary.)

(It would be well for the teacher to let the children say the Our Father before and after the instruction. Let one child lead, while the others answer.)

XL.

Jesus Teaches about Heaven, His Father's House.

Dear children, you can see daily how many strangers pass through this city. When travelers arrive here in the evening, what do they look for first? Yes, they look for a place where they can pass the night, and if they could not find any place they would have to contend with a great deal during the cold night. When these strangers

reach their own town, do they have to seek a dwelling there? Where do they go to at once? Yes, they go home to their parents' house. Children, I must tell you something which perhaps you have not heard before, namely, that we are all strangers in this world. This earth is not our home; we sojourn upon it for a short while only, and then journey to our true country. Do you know which is really our home? Where does the Father of all dwell? And where do you wish to go one day? Hearken to what Jesus has taught us about heaven! Jesus teaches: *In my Father's house there are many mansions. And I go to prepare a place for you.* What do you call the dwelling where you now live? Yes, we say usually it is my father's house. In this way does Jesus compare heaven to a house which belongs to His Father. Which father requires the largest house, the one who has many children or the one who has a few? How many children do you suppose our Father in heaven has? We could not count them; for all men who have lived from the creation of the world until now, and who will live until the end of the world, whose children are they? Will they all find a dwelling in the house of their heavenly Father? What did Jesus teach? Children, if you were obliged to leave your home, and go to a strange land which you knew nothing about, would you do so willingly? But if, for instance, an elder brother should say to you, "Fear not, I know this country very well. It is a most beautiful, fruitful country, where everything that can make man happy is in abundance. I have just come from that country, and I have prepared a place for you there," would you not go gladly, then, to that beautiful country? It is the same with our heavenly home. Whence did Jesus come? And what did He promise to prepare for us there? "I will also prepare a place for you." What has Jesus taught about heaven? "In my Father's house," etc.

Jesus has returned again to heaven. Listen to the consoling promise He has given us. He said: *I shall come again, and take you with me, that you may be where I am.* When the father or mother are going out, the children ask at once: "Father, mother, where are you going?" And the little children especially like to go, too. When the parents will not allow them to go, they are sorrowful and begin to cry. Have you not seen this, or done it yourself, perhaps? But if the father or mother says, "You can not go with me now, dear child, but I shall return soon, and then you can go with me," the child is contented, and waits gladly. Children,

Jesus once said to His disciples that He was going to the Father; then they, too, were sad, because they loved Him dearly, and they did not wish to be separated from Him. What did He promise them to console them? "I shall come again," etc. This promise, dear children, concerns us all. Jesus Christ will come again, and take us to Himself, namely, when we die. He takes our souls to Himself, but the body is laid in the grave, where it decomposes and returns to the dust from whence it was taken. Children, I am sure you would like to know how it will be with us in the other world. Hearken to what Jesus says about this. He teaches: *You will see me, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one shall take your joy away from you.* If a person who has been very kind to us, and whom, therefore, we like very much, has been away for a long time, and then returns unexpectedly, how do we feel, glad or sorry? There is no one who has shown us so much kindness as Jesus Christ, and we shall see Him one day. Dear children, are you not glad that you will see Jesus one day? I will tell you about the second coming of Jesus upon earth at the judgment-day.

At the end of the world Jesus Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. But He will not come into the world poor and unknown as He came the first time at Bethlehem, but in the clouds of heaven with great power and might, in majesty and glory. The holy angels who will accompany Him He will send forth with mighty sounding trumpets, and they will call His elect together from all parts of the world. Then, dear children, all the dead will rise from their graves and appear before Jesus. Which of these men will rejoice the most when they see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven, those who loved Him and kept His commandments or those who led a wicked life and offended Jesus? And no one will be able to take this joy away from the good. In this world the wicked often spoil the joy of the good and take it away, but then this will be so no more. For Jesus will separate the good from the bad, as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats. He will place the good people at His right hand, and the wicked at His left. The good He will take with Him to heaven, and the wicked He will cast into hell. What will the good do then? And what will the wicked do? That you may one day be placed among the good, observe well what Jesus teaches will happen when the good see Him again. What will take place then? "You will see me," etc. Will you see Jesus, too, N.? And you, N.? And you, N.? Will you be still living then? But

if you will be dead then, if you have been buried in a grave, how will you be able to see Jesus? Yes, children, Jesus will awaken all men, and us also, from the dead. I will now tell you a story, so that you may understand why you should take this instruction particularly to heart.

A number of men were on a journey in their own country. An old experienced man who knew the way well traveled with them. They came to a dense forest through which the way led. Then the old man said: "In this forest there are bands of daring robbers who plunder all those wayfarers who fall into their hands and very often murder them. Keep together, so that no one is left behind. If we keep together, they will not venture to lay hands upon us." They all promised to follow his advice. After having proceeded several miles in the forest, some of the party complained of fatigue, and in spite of the old man's warning, they lay down under the shade of a tree and slept.

While they slept on, the robbers came and discovered them. It was an easy matter for them to take the sleepers' lives, which they did. They robbed them of everything they had, and their dead bodies became the prey of wild beasts and birds. Children, would these travelers have been killed if they had obeyed the old man? Their death was caused by their own fault, because they did not listen to the warning given them.

Those who did obey the old man arrived, tired, of course, but safely, at the end of the forest, and they were very glad indeed to have escaped the danger. The way now led through a road on either side of which were planted the finest fruit trees, which bore the most delicious fruit. The wayfarers were hungry and thirsty, and would gladly have enjoyed this fruit, but the old man drew their attention to a sign which read: "Any one touching this fruit will be punished according to the law." Regardless of this, some of them shook the trees, and a quantity of apples and pears fell down. While they were picking up the fruit and tasting it, they were suddenly surrounded by soldiers who arrested them, and took them before the judge. He in turn imposed a heavy fine upon them and, being unable to pay, they were sent to prison until the debt should be paid. Oh, how they repented in the dungeon that they had not followed their leader's advice!

The travelers who had not touched the trees arrived with their guide, worn out, at a large, fine inn, where a number of festive people

were assembled. Then the old man said: "We will only stay here to take some refreshment, so that we shall be enabled to continue our journey. Take my advice and do not eat or drink too much, and when I give the signal to start again follow me at once, otherwise you will certainly be very unfortunate." After they had finished their repast, the guide said: "Now let us move on and complete our journey." But some of the party said: "It is so pleasant and merry here, we can not possibly leave just now. We would rather stay here a little longer, and continue the journey later on." And they did so, and ate and drank until late at night. Now hearken what happened!

That same night fire broke out in the inn. In the excitement it was forgotten to arouse the travelers, and when they woke up of their own accord the fire had already made such headway that they were enveloped in flames, and perished miserably. How they must have repented not having obeyed their guide!

The few who had followed the old man arrived at last at home. They were received joyfully by parents and relations, and they were now able to rest after the hardships of the journey, and to pass their lives in peace and happiness in their own home.

Children, this world is not our real home. Our real home is heaven. On our journey to our home—to heaven—a great many dangers beset our way, and in our next lesson I will tell you what the story just heard should teach us, how it should make us careful to avoid the dangers and difficulties met on our way to heaven. Therefore, be careful not to forget this story, so that you may remember the various incidents when I, in our next lesson, explain them to you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

116. What did Jesus teach us about heaven? He taught: "In My Father's house there are many mansions. I will also prepare a place for you there."

117. Before Jesus returned to heaven, what consoling promise did He make to us? "I shall come again, and take you with me; that where I am, there you may be also."

118. We shall see Him again, then. What does Jesus teach on this subject? "You will see Me, and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one shall take from you."

XLI.

THE FOUR LAST THINGS: 1. DEATH. 2. JUDGMENT. 3. HELL. 4. HEAVEN.

Children, is this world our home, our true country?—Whither do we wish to travel?—On this journey to heaven, to the house of our Father, we are threatened by many dangers, but God warns us of these by our conscience, by pious persons, by His commandments, and in many other ways. If, however, we do as many of those travellers did, of which I told you in our last lesson, who did not heed the warnings of their guide: then we shall be as unfortunate as they were, and not reach our heavenly home. Why did they not reach home?—What was it that some of them should not have done in the forest?—Children, the devil and his helpers, the wicked men, are the robbers, and the murderers of our souls; we must fly from them, and be very watchful, otherwise we shall meet death like those travellers, even everlasting death.

Their guide had warned them of death, and so does God also warn us of death. It is certain that we all must die, but those who die a death in sin, in disobedience to God, will they go to heaven?—Children, think frequently of death; obey God's commandments and lead a pious life, so that you may die a good and blessed death. What was the second thing that prevented some of the wayfarers from reaching home?—Yes, it was their disobedience to the law, and the judgment of the court. Children, who will judge us after this life?—Will Jesus reward or punish those who have been wicked and transgressed His commandments?—Think, therefore, often of the judgment of God. Of what then should we often think?—In what way could those wayfarers know that they were forbidden to take the fruit?—What did God give us, written upon two tablets of stone?—Obey these commandments therefore, so that at the judgment day you may not be condemned to eternal punishment.

The wayfarers who were burned to death in the inn, resemble those persons who in this world seek nothing but pleasure and joys, and consequently forget all about the journey to heaven. They will be taken out of this world unexpectedly and cast into the fire of hell, where they will have to endure eternal torments. Chil-

dren, we may be happy in this world, and enjoy God's benefits with thankful hearts; but we must not on that account forget heaven, we must not sin in our pleasures, otherwise what would become of us?—Yes, we should go to hell. Think of this then, children, especially when you are tempted to indulge in sinful pleasure. When you feel inclined to do wrong, and you say to yourself: Why shall I go into everlasting fire for a passing pleasure? then certainly the bad desire will be scared away. What is then the third point of which we should often think?—If we do not want to go to hell, what should we always do, and what should we avoid doing?

A few of the wayfarers who had obeyed their guide faithfully, reached their country in safety, where they lived in peace and happiness with those they loved. Dear children, I must now tell you a terrible truth. Jesus has taught, that although many persons will start on the way to heaven, only a few will ever obtain that happiness. Begin therefore, now, in your youth, to lead such a life, which will conduct you to heaven. You must desire with your whole heart to go to heaven, and for this reason, you must think of heaven, and particularly when it is difficult for you to do good and avoid evil. "Heaven is my happy home." This thought will certainly encourage you to lead a good life. There are, therefore, four things, of which we should frequently remind ourselves, and they are: 1. Death. 2. Judgment. 3. Hell. 4. Heaven. And why should we often think of them?—Because they keep us from sinning. Now, would it be possible for a person to sin, who, as often as he was tempted to do wrong, thought: You must *die* one day; then you will be *judged* and if you have been wicked you will be cast into *hell,* and shut out from *heaven* forever. In some families they observe the pious custom, after saying grace at table, to add: *The four last things of man are: 1. Death. 2. Judgment. 3. Hell. 4. Heaven. Think, O man in all thy actions of the four last things, and thou wilt never sin."* Children, you must learn to pray this, too, I will repeat it for you several times.—What are the four last things, and why should we think of them often?

Dear children, when I look at you all, the question arises in my mind: Will these children all go to heaven?—And when I think: perhaps some of them will be lost, and go to hell, it is dreadful thought to me. If at this moment one of you was to be taken

out of our midst, and shut up in a dark prison from whence he would never come out again, what a terrible fate that would be for this unfortunate child?—Would you not take great pity on this child, and would not try everything to escape such a dreadful fate?—Live piously, therefore, and do what Jesus has taught us to do, then you will certainly not meet with such misfortune in the next world. Why, dear children, did Jesus tell us about beautiful heaven?—He said: I have told you this that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be perfect. Jesus will be infinitely glad if we go to Him in heaven one day. And what should we do to get there?—we must rejoice in obeying the teachings of Jesus; for Jesus says: Blessed are you if you do this. Is it not sufficient to simply listen to the teaching of Jesus? What is the principal thing?—I say also with Jesus, who is the children's best teacher: Dear children, as you know this, you also will be blessed if you do as Jesus taught us to do. And you will give this promise now to Jesus, your Saviour and Teacher, will you not?—God grant that you may also keep the promise!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

119. What are the four last things of man, and why should we often think upon them? The four last things are: 1. Death. 2. Judgment. 3. Hell. 4. Heaven. Think, O man, in all thy works of the four last things, and thou wilt never sin.

XLII.

Jesus Works Miracles of All Kinds; He is Man's Best Friend.

Dear Children! Who is Jesus Christ?—Yes, that is what the Angel said to Mary: He will be called the Son of the Most High. And what did God speak in the voice from heaven?—Jesus Christ also said Himself, and His whole life confirms it, that He is the Son of God. Now, children, if some one was to say to you at this moment: I am the Son of God; would you believe him?—Jesus looked like a man, He was really a man. But that He was also God, no one could tell; for this reason people would not believe that He was the Son of God. Now hear what Jesus did, in order

that man should know that He was more than man, that He even was the Son of Almighty God. The first thing that I told you about God, was that He could make all things that He willed. The same must be said of Jesus: He can make all things that He wills. What did God say when He created heaven, and earth, and everything that they contain?—So also at a word, at a sign from Jesus, everything that He wished took place. I will first of all tell you about the *Omnipotence* of the Father, and then I will tell you something of the *Omnipotence* of Jesus, the Son of God.

At the creation of the world God said: Let all the waters gather together in one place, and let the dry land appear! And this happened at once. Now, listen: Jesus was once on the water with His disciples, when a fearful storm arose and the disciples cried out: "Lord save us, we perish." Then Jesus commanded the sea, and it became quiet immediately. Is this not wonderful, dear children! does the sea obey man?—Jesus therefore showed that He was more than man. He is the Almighty Son of God.

How do we obtain food from God?—Does God let the corn grow in abundance without man doing his share of work?—When men sow, God multiplies the grain in a miraculous way. He makes, for instance, thirty, sixty, sometimes a hundred ears of corn to grow out of one grain. Is that not wonderful?—Should we be able to live if God in His omnipotence did not multiply the grain in the fields every year?—Now listen to something similar about Jesus Christ! Jesus was once teaching in the wilderness, where thousands of people had followed Him. It was getting dark, and there was nothing in the desert wherewith to satisfy the people's hunger. They only had five barley loaves and two fish. How could this be sufficient for so many people? Then Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish,—looked up to heaven—gave thanks—and blessed them. Then He broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, and the disciples distributed it amongst the multitudes. In the same way He had the fish distributed, and they all had as much as they could eat. Yes, all those thousands of people had enough to eat. And when that which was left over was gathered, it filled twelve baskets. Children, is this not very wonderful?—Could a man do this?—Who, therefore, is Jesus Christ?—

God formed the human body out of clay. But it lay upon the ground motionless and dead. Then God breathed a soul into it. The body stood up and lived. And what useful members have

you got on your body?—It has often happened that a man, either through sickness or an accident has lost some part of his body. Can any one create a new part for such an unfortunate person?—For instance can a doctor replace an eye just like the one that has been lost?—No man can do this. But Jesus, who is God and man at the same time, can do this, and He proved His omnipotence by restoring parts of the human body which had been dead, by a word or by the touch of His hand.

God gave us eyes in our body to see with. The eye of man is so wonderfully arranged, that we can see objects all around us. But there are men so unfortunate as to have eyes and yet are not able to see with them. What are such men called?—Jesus cured a youth who was born blind, in the most wonderful manner. He took a little spittle, mixed it with earth, and spread it upon the eyes of him who was born blind, saying to him: Go, and wash thyself in the pool of Siloam! He went, washed himself—and returned seeing. Children, if *we* were to lay earth upon the eyes of a blind person, and then let him go and wash himself, would we enable him to see?—To whom did Jesus restore the sight miraculously?—What does this teach us?—

Children, do you hear me?—With what?—Who created the ear of man, and arranged it so beautifully that we can hear with it?—What are those persons called, who have ears, and cannot hear?—A deaf person is very much to be pitied. As a rule deaf persons are also unable to speak, and then they are called deaf mutes. A deaf mute like this was brought to Jesus, and He was asked to cure him. Jesus put His fingers in his ears, and touched his tongue with spittle, looked up to heaven, sighed, and said to him: *Ephpheta,* that is to say, Be thou opened! and immediately his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed and he spoke. Children, the persons who saw this, wondered. Would you not be astounded also at such a miracle?—Jesus therefore made the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and what ought this to teach us?—What has God created on your body by means of which you walk?—There are men, who have feet, and yet they cannot walk; what are these unfortunate persons called?—Can we make the lame walk?—Wonder at the power of Jesus. They brought to Him those that were lame, and He cured them immediately. Once upon a time Jesus saw a man lying in bed, who had been sick for thirty-eight years, and He said to him: Arise, take thy bed, and walk. And immediately

the man was cured, and he took up his bed, and walked. Yes, Jesus healed men of whatever sickness they were afflicted with.

Children, did God create only the body of man?—What did He breathe into the body?—And what happened then?—Jesus exhibited the same power. He gave life to the dead. He raised them to life. I will tell you a little story to inspire you with a firm confidence in Jesus, who can raise the dead to life. Upon one occasion Jesus entered a city with His disciples. At the same time they carried out of the gate the corpse of one who had been in life the only son of his mother. The mother and many persons accompanied the corpse. When Jesus saw the mother, He was sorry for her, and said kindly: Weep not! Then He ordered the bearers to stand still. They put the bier down. They could all see the dead body in the open coffin. Jesus said: Young man, I say unto thee, arise! And the dead arose, and Jesus led him back to his mother.

I will tell you this once more, and then divide it into several questions.—Where was Jesus going with His disciples?—What were they carrying out of the gate?—Who was the dead man?—Who accompanied the corpse?—When Jesus saw the mother how did He feel towards her?—What did He say to her kindly?—What did He order the bearers to do?—What did they do?—Who was seen lying in the open coffin?—What did Jesus say to the young man?—And what happened?—Where did Jesus lead him?—(These questions should be asked until the children are able to recite the story.)

From what I have told you, children, to-day about Jesus, you can see that Jesus is man's best friend, and you should pay great attention to this. If then I ask: Is Jesus a friend of man? You must answer: *Jesus is man's friend.* In Him, dear children, is God's goodness to man plainly visible. Now could Jesus have been kinder or more gentle to man than He really was?—Wherever He went, and He met the poor, the sick, the wretched and needy, He always helped them. Jesus has thus given us a beautiful example of how we should behave to those who are in want and trouble. Dear children, do not be hard hearted; whenever you can show kindness to a poor or sick person, do it, for Jesus will accept your deed just as if you had done it to Him.

If I ask: How did Jesus show His kindness for mankind? You must answer: *He went about helping all who were in want*

and misery. And what should you do?—If Jesus were to ask you for a piece of bread, or a drink of water, or anything else, could you be so ungrateful, dear children, so uncharitable, as to refuse Him if you were able to help Him? Remember, however, that Jesus has said: "Whatsoever you do to one of these the least of my brethren, you have done unto Me." And in the next world He will not let go unrewarded even a drink of water that was handed to a poor person for His sake. When a poor or needy person asks you for something, treat him as if Jesus Himself had asked you for it. Never be rude and unkind to the poor and needy, or Jesus will treat also you without mercy when you appear before Him to be judged. Now you must tell me the miracles which Jesus worked. This will be easier for you if you think of those members of your body which Jesus healed in those unfortunate persons. I will name them to you. *He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, He healed the sick, and even brought the dead to life.* What miracles did Jesus work?—Could a man do such things?—Can we, by these works, tell who Jesus was?—He was the omnipotent Son of God. He can help us, for He is almighty; what He wills, happens. He will help us because He is man's best Friend, and He calls to all, who are needy and miserable, with love and compassion: "Come to Me, all you who are burdened, and I will refresh you." Let us obey this call, dear children, and in all our troubles pray devoutly to Jesus who will surely help us.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

120. How did Jesus treat all men? Jesus is the best friend of all men.
121. In what way did He show His friendship for man? He went about helping all those who were needy and miserable.
122. What miracles did Jesus work? He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk. He healed the sick. He even raised the dead to life. (Narration).

XLIII.

Jesus is the Children's Greatest Friend.

Dear children, that which I am going to tell you to-day about Jesus, the Son of God, concerns you particularly, because it con-

tains the sentiments of Jesus towards children. There are persons who are particularly fond of innocent, good children, and are kind to them at every opportunity; then again there are other person who are harsh and unkind toward children, hurt them, tease and ill treat them; which of these persons would you like better?—Those who are fond of children or those who do not like them?—How ought a friend of children feel towards children?—Yes, he ought to love children very much.

Children stand so much in need of the assistance of grown people, that without them, they would perish miserably. If no one looked after the food, clothing and shelter of the children, would they be able to procure these things for themselves?—Now, when a child is poor, needy and sick, and otherwise afflicted, what does it require?—Would one be a friend of children, who could see a poor sick child suffering, and not have compassion and help it?—What should a friend of children do for children when they are in want?—This, dear children, is what Jesus did. He loved children very much, and helped them in all their needs; for this reason He was the children's greatest friend. What was Jesus to the children?—*Jesus Christ is the children's greatest friend.*

I will now tell you a story which will show you how Jesus loved children, how friendly He was to them, and what kindness and love He showed them.

One day some pious mothers brought their children to Jesus that He might bless them. His disciples wanted to keep them away. But Jesus said kindly and gently: "Suffer the little children to come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And He took the children in His arms, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them.

So that you may thoroughly understand how gently Jesus took the children in His arms and blessed them, I will show you this event in a picture.—Here is Jesus, the children's friend. These men are His disciples; these women are the mothers of the children. Look at the children, big and little, how they all try to get near to Jesus, and how kindly He receives them. Does not this picture please you very much?—You must now learn this story by heart, and I will help you to do so.

Why did the pious mothers bring their children to Jesus one day?—Who wanted to keep them away?—But what did Jesus say kindly and gently?—What did He do with the children?—And

what good did He do to them?—You must particularly remember the words which the divine friend of children said to the children: what were they?—*Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven!*

Children, would you not like to have been one of those children to whom Jesus was so kind, and whom He blessed?—Jesus is not with us any longer in human form, for He has returned to His Father in heaven, but do you think He, the divine friend of children, would not love the children all the same?—O yes, He loves all good, innocent children most tenderly, and He looks down from heaven upon them with pleasure. He wishes to give heaven to them and bless them. You must therefore love Jesus very much, your greatest friend, you must be good and innocent, you must like to pray to Him. What has He promised to such good children?—If you would all receive the kingdom of heaven from Jesus one day, what happiness this would be for you through all eternity! From the story which I have just told you, you may see how Jesus loved children. But a friend of children also helps them in all their necessities. Jesus did this likewise, as you will see in the following story. Jesus was once sitting at table, when the father of a sick child came to Him, fell at His feet and said: My daughter lies sick, at the point of death; come and place Thy Hand upon her, and she will be healed and live. Jesus arose immediately and went with him. But when Jesus arrived at the house, the girl, who was only twelve years of age, was already dead. Father, mother and the entire household wept and mourned. But Jesus said kindly: "Weep not! The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth only." Thereupon Jesus took her by the hand and said: "Maiden, I say unto thee, arise!" Thereupon the dead child came to life, and rose up, and the parents were filled with astonishment and joy. If I ask you now: What love in particular did Jesus show to the daughter of Jairus, for that was the name of the girl's father; you must answer: *Jesus raised the girl, who was dead, to life again.*

This little picture represents Jesus raising the daughter of Jairus from the dead. I will give this picture to the one who will now repeat this story to me. First of all, I will rehearse it with a few short questions.—As Jesus sat at table one day, who came to Him?—What did the father of the sick child do and what did he say?—What did Jesus do immediately?—When Jesus arrived at the house what had happened to the girl?—What did the parents and all the

household do?—What did Jesus say gently?—What did Jesus do with the girl's hand, and what did He say to her? Then what happened with the dead child?—And when the child arose, how were her parents affected?—

If Jesus loves the children so tenderly that He helps them in all their needs, what ought the children do?—You should love this divine friend of children very much, pray to Him, and no matter what happens to you always take refuge with Him. You must now tell me how we may know those children who really love Jesus?—Name the ten commandments?—What is the great commandment of love?—Never sin against this commandment, for by so doing you would grieve your heavenly friend, and He could not receive you into heaven. Where will bad children be put?—Yes; God punishes children when they are bad. Listen to a story which will show you, how God punished some children, who did not love their friend, and made fun of him. The prophet Eliseus, who was very fond of children and was kind to them, once went into a town. As he walked along, he met some litttle boys who made fun of him and called after him: Come here, bald head! Come here, bald head! The prophet had through old age lost most of his hair and was bald headed. The prophet looked at the bad boys and warned them, they would be terribly punished by God for their wickedness. And immediately there came two bears out of the forest, who killed these wicked children. Thus, children, did God demonstrate in a terrible manner how displeasing it is to Him when children do not love those who mean well by them. If these boys had greeted the old prophet respectfully, no evil would have befallen them. The holy man would have blessed them, and prayed to God for their welfare.

You must not only love Jesus, the children's greatest friend, but you should also love any other friend of children. There are, thank God, many persons who are very fond of you children, and who strive to please you whenever they can. If children grieve such friends by disobedience or wickedness, what will God do with such bad children?—Bear this in mind, then, always love Jesus, your best friend; and also all those who are friendly to you, and strive to please them by good behavior.

When I meet children in the street or elsewhere, I have often noticed that some children run away as soon as they see me, as if they were afraid of me. Others, on the contrary, come up to me

in the most friendly way. Which behavior do you think is the better?—You must never behave like those ill-mannered, unsociable and unfriendly children who would sooner run away than give a kindly greeting. You know that I love you all very much, and when I can give you any little pleasure I do so gladly, and I help you when it is necessary. And do you not think that I must feel very bad when I see my affection treated with unfriendliness by children?—And so does every friend of children. If a child is sent to church to worship Jesus, the great friend of children, and either does not go, or goes there but prays without devotion, even laughs or talks, does such a child love Jesus, the children's friend?—When I am speaking to you about Jesus, and some children are inattentive and do not care to hear about Jesus, but rather talk and play, are they pleasing to Jesus, the children's friend; will they obtain His blessing? Does Jesus not know whether children love Him or not?—What does He desire?—Do you wish to love Him in return?—We will now prove our love for Him by reciting devoutly the Our Father, as we have been taught by Jesus, so that we may be blessed by Him.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

123. What was Jesus to the children? Jesus Christ was the greatest friend to children.

124. What did He say to the children upon one occasion? Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

125. What love did Jesus show to the daughter of Jairus? Jesus raised the girl who was dead to life again.

XLIV.

Jesus is the Redeemer of Mankind by His Passion and Death.

Dear children, I have already told you many things by which you see how much Jesus loved mankind. For love of us He left the glory of heaven to become man. For love of us He was exposed, even from His earliest youth, to poverty, persecution, and hard toil. For three years Jesus taught man untiringly everything necessary to know, for his sanctification in this world and his eternal happiness in the other. What did Jesus teach us as to who had the great-

est love? Life is the greatest blessing that we have here below, and he who gives his life for his friend shows the greatest love. To give our life for any one what must we do?—Is it pleasant and easy to die?—Death is usually accompanied with great suffering. Dear children, you have heard a great deal whereby you recognize the love of Jesus for mankind, but the best way to fully understand His great love for us, is to meditate on His great sufferings for us. Listen therefore with compassion and reverence to the sad story of the bitter passion of Jesus our Redeemer!

You know that when Jesus was twelve years old He went with His parents to the temple in Jerusalem. And before He began His passion He went again with His disciples to the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus is not only man, He is also God, and therefore He knew beforehand everything that He would have to suffer. His disciples did not know this as they were only men. On the way to Jerusalem Jesus said to them: "Behold, we go to Jerusalem, and all those things will come to pass which God has revealed by the prophets concerning the Redeemer of the world. The Redeemer will be mocked, scourged, and spit upon: and after they have scourged Him they will put Him to death; but He will rise again upon the third day."

What did Jesus say to His disciples?—Who told Jesus that He would have to suffer so much?—Do you know everything that you will have to suffer in the future?—Who is Jesus Christ that He knows things which will happen in the future?—If you knew that you would be killed in a certain place, would you go there?—Now although Jesus knew everything that would happen to him in Jerusalem, still He went there; for children, Jesus took these sufferings upon Himself of His own free will. No one could have forced Him to do it. For whose sake then did Jesus suffer?—And if He had not done this where should we all have to go in the next world?—Why, what would have condemned us to hell?—From this sin Jesus redeemed us.

When Jesus, with His disciples, drew near to the city of Jerusalem, He was met by a crowd of people. They took branches from the trees in their hands and led Jesus into the city with glad rejoicing. They exclaimed: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Praise be to Him who cometh in the name of the Lord!" In remembrance of this solemn entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, every year on Palm Sunday the faithful, in the churches, receive branches

of blessed palm. Many of you, I daresay, have, on Palm Sunday, seen the priests and the people with palms in their hands walking in procession through the church, while the choir sings hymns. Why is this done? What should it remind us of?

But Jesus had prophesied that they would mock, scourge, spit upon and kill Him at Jerusalem, and now He is entering the city midst rejoicings; how is this?—Because, children, what Jesus had said, was yet to take place. This rejoicing did not last long, Jesus had many enemies, they were those wicked people who were greatly scandalized, seeing how Jesus was honored, and they resolved that they would put Him to death. And now listen what they did. Amongst the disciples of Jesus, there was one called Judas. He loved money better than anything else, and would not hesitate to do any bad deed for the sake of money. He knew that the enemies of Jesus wanted to kill Him, and so he went to them and said: What will you give me if I deliver Him to you?—They promised him money, thirty pieces of silver, and he promised to deliver Jesus into their hands. What do you think of this Judas?—Did not he act most wickedly and shamefully?—He was willing to betray his friend and greatest benefactor for thirty pieces of silver. What was the name of this wicked disciple of Jesus?

Children, I have already told you that Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to Him; did Jesus know then also that Judas was going to betray Him?—Jesus can look into the heart of man. He knows their most secret thoughts, did He not also know what wicked thing Judas was about to do?—Yes, Jesus knew it well, but in His great mercy He wished to save this wretched Judas. Therefore He showed Judas that He knew of it and warned him. Jesus did this at the last supper, of which I shall speak to you later, when He said to his disciples, who were seated at table with Him, in tones of sorrow and grief: "Verily I say unto you, one of you will betray me. But woe to the one who will betray me. It were better for him that he had never been born." The disciples looked at one another in fear, and could not imagine which one He meant. One after the other they asked Jesus: "Lord, is it I?"—At last, even Judas asked: "Lord, is it I?" and Jesus said, without being heard by the others: "Thou hast said it!"—And shortly afterwards Judas went out to betray Jesus. What can Jesus look into?—Did He know what Judas contemplated in his heart?—Who is Jesus Christ?—Did the warning of Jesus

restrain the wicked Judas?—O, children, if Judas had not been so obstinate, and had minded the gentle admonition of Jesus, he would not have been so unfortunate as to have betrayed Jesus. Jesus had to undergo more sorrow through Peter, another of His disciples, which He had also foretold. After Judas had left, Jesus remained at table with the other disciples. He spoke to them of His departure to the Father. Then Peter asked: "Lord, whither goest thou?" Jesus answered: "Where I go thou canst not follow me." Peter said: "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?—Behold I would give my life for thee!" Jesus said: "Thou wouldst give thy life for me? O Peter! Verily, verily, I say unto thee that before the cock crows twice, thou wilt have denied me thrice." Peter would not believe this, although Jesus repeated clearly and positively: "Verily, I say to thee: This night—even this very night—before the cock crows twice—thou wilt deny me thrice."

Peter considered it impossible that he would ever deny his best friend, his divine Master. "Lord," he said once again, "and if I must die with thee, I would not deny thee. I am ready to go with thee into prison, and to death." Children, who knows what I am going to do to-day, I myself, or you?—We are weak, and though we make up our minds not to do a thing, in the end we may do it all the same. Jesus knew what Peter was going to do, better than Peter did himself. Why did Jesus know this better?—Who is Jesus?—And who is Peter?—Peter is only a man, but Jesus is God and man at the same time, He is the omniscient Son of God. To which of the disciples did Jesus foretell that he would deny Him?—You will hear now what happened. Jesus then went with His disciples to the Mount of Olives, which was a garden in which a great many olive trees grew. Adjoining this garden there was another smaller garden, called Gethsemani, where Jesus often went to pray. When He entered the garden He said to His disciples, "Sit down here, while I go up and pray. Pray also, that you may not be led into temptation." He took only three of His disciples, Peter, James and John with Him, and went on farther into the garden. Here, He was overcome by a great sadness and dejection. He trembled with fear and apprehension. All the sufferings that He would have to undergo, passed before His mind. The enormous guilt of man's sins, their malice, and obduracy caused Him such sorrow, that He said to His disciples: My soul is sorrowful unto death! Stay here, and watch and pray with

me. Then Jesus went still farther into the garden and prayed: "Father, if it be possible, take this chalice away from me! Yet not my will be done, but thine." Jesus prayed thus three times and His agony was so great, that a sweat of blood broke out upon Him. His sweat was like blood, which ran down upon the ground. And after He had prayed the third time: "Father, if thou wilt not remove this chalice from me, thy will be done!" an angel appeared and strengthened Him.

Dear children, when a man has committed a crime, and has to undergo a severe punishment for it, how wretched must he feel? —Imagine the sins of all men, and the great punishment which they deserved, and this awful punishment Jesus would take upon Himself. O what a fearful thing sin is, for if men had not sinned, Jesus would not have had to suffer this great agony. Why did He suffer such an agony?—Remember this: *On the Mount of Olives He suffered such agony, that He sweated blood.* What did Jesus suffer on the Mount of Olives? Now hear how the prophecy of Jesus concerning Judas came true. Judas had joined the enemies of Jesus and asked for soldiers and helpers, which he would lead to the place where Jesus was praying, that they might take Him prisoner. With these soldiers, who were provided with lanterns, spears, and swords, Judas entered the garden. Judas had said to the soldiers: The one whom I shall kiss is the one, seize Him! The shameless Judas then approached Jesus and said to Him: "Master, welcome!" and kissed Him. Then Jesus said sadly: "Friend, why art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"—How did Judas betray Jesus?—What did he do?—What did he say?—thereupon Jesus went up to the armed men and said to them: "Whom seek ye?"—They answered Him: "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said with dignity: "I am He!" At these words they fell back, and fell to the ground as if struck by lightning. By this Jesus showed that without His will they could no take Him prisoner. He went willingly to death; none could have forced Him to it.

As the soldiers rose up again, Jesus asked them: "Whom seek ye?"—They answered again: "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said—without this time making them feel His almighty power: "I have told you, that I am He. If you seek me, let these go free," and He pointed to His disciples.

The soldiers and servants approached Jesus, and laid hands

upon Him, to take Him prisoner. He patiently allowed His hands to be bound, and they dragged Him forth, and led Him into the city to His enemies. The Apostles, however, and even Peter, fled, just as Jesus had foretold.

Now, dear children, remember well what I have told you to-day. I shall continue the history of the bitter passion of our Lord in our next lesson, and I shall expect you then to answer my questions about to-day's lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

126. In what way can we best tell the love of Jesus for us? We can tell His love for us the best by all that He suffered for us.
127. What did Jesus suffer on the Mount of Olives? On the Mount of Olives He suffered such an agony that a bloody sweat broke out upon Him.

XLV.

Jesus Suffered to be Scourged and Mocked for Love of Us.

In our last lesson, you have heard, dear children, that the soldiers and servants took Jesus prisoner and led Him into the city of Jerusalem. Here Jesus was dragged before a judge, just as if He had committed a crime. False witnesses testified against Jesus, and accused Him of all sorts of bad deeds, nevertheless no wrong could be proved to Him, simply because Jesus had never said or done anything wrong. Then the judge, who was the high priest, asked Him: "I adjure thee by the living God, to tell us the truth: Art thou the Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus answered: "It is, as thou sayest. I am he. And I tell you of a truth, that you will soon see the son of man sitting at the right of the power of God, and you will see him coming upon the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest rent his garments and cried: "He has blasphemed God!" For they would not acknowledge Jesus to be the Son of God. All those who were present at the tribunal cried out: He has deserved death. Children, who is Jesus Christ?—What did the voice from heaven say? What did Jesus say to His mother in the Temple at Jerusalem? In what way did He prove that He can do all things that He wills? Where did He demonstrate that He

knew everything, that He could look into the hearts of men, and know what they were thinking about? Was this judge right or wrong?

The soldiers and servants conducted Jesus below into the courtyard of the palace, there to guard Him for the rest of the night. And there they commenced their mockery. Some of them spat in His face, and struck Him upon the cheek. Others bound His eyes, struck Him, and said: "Thou art the Messiah, the great prophet, prophesy to us therefore who it is that struck thee?" And they blasphemed Him in many other ways. What do you think, dear children, of the shameful behavior of these men? Any one who can mock at an unfortunate person, no matter who it is, must be very bad. Never be guilty of such a crime, like these cruel soldiers. What did the soldiers do to Jesus?

I have already told you what Jesus had foretold of Peter. Who can tell me? Did Peter believe that he would deny Jesus? It happened however just as Jesus prophesied. Peter and John had followed Jesus at a distance to the courtyard of the high priests. At night the soldiers made a fire in the courtyard, because the night was cold. Peter, feeling the cold, approached the fire, and sat down with the soldiers, wishing to wait and find out what they were going to do with Jesus. A servant girl came up and said to Peter: "You are one of the disciples of Jesus?" Peter, however, was frightened, and he denied it. "No," he said, "I am not. I do not even know him. I cannot understand why you should say such a thing." With these words he left the courtyard, and went out. Meanwhile the cock had crowed for the first time. Peter shortly afterwards returned to the courtyard. There he was seen by another person, and this one too said immediately: "Behold, that one was also with Jesus of Nazareth, he is one of his adherents." Peter denied it again. "I am not one of them, and I know not the man." Finally another one of the men said, pointing at Peter: "This one is an adherent of him." Peter still more frightened said: "Man, I do not know of whom you are speaking." Nevertheless, the other servants, looking at him closer, said: "Yea, verily, it is so! Thou art one of them." And Peter began to curse and to swear that he did not know the man called Jesus. Just then the cock crowed the second time. What Jesus had told beforehand, had come to pass: "This night before the cock crows twice, thou wilt deny me thrice."

At that very moment, Jesus was led past the courtyard; Jesus turned round and looked sadly and reproachfully at Peter. Peter remembered the words of Jesus, and he went out, covered himself with his cloak, and began to weep bitterly. What wrong did Peter? And when Jesus looked at him reproachfully, what happened? If we should ever be so unfortunate as to fall into sin like Peter, what should we do immediately, the same as Peter? Yes, we should sincerely repent and weep over our fault, and make amendment as he did. Children, what wrong did Judas do? How much money did he get for committing his foul deed? Now hear what happened to the unfortunate Judas. When Judas saw that Jesus whom he had betrayed, was to be condemned to death, he became frightened. He took back the thirty pieces of silver to the high priests and cried out: "I have sinned! I have betrayed innocent blood!" The chief priests, however, made answer: "What does that matter to us! Look thou to it!" At these words, Judas, pale and trembling with fright, threw the money down on the floor, rushed away, and in his despair, took a rope, and hanged himself. O children, how miserable Judas was because he sinned, and did not amend while there was yet time. If we do not wish to be so unfortunate, of what ought we to be very careful? Not to commit sin, for to die in sin is the worst of deaths, so we see in Judas.

Jesus was then bound and led before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. His enemies demanded that Pilate should execute Him at once. They accused Jesus falsely, that He had blasphemed God, in saying He was the Son of God; that He was a seducer of the people, that He forbade them to pay tribute to Cæsar, and proclaimed Himself as Christ, the King of Israel. Pilate, who inquired into their accusations, found no guilt in Jesus, and became aware that the chief priests had out of envy delivered Jesus to him. The enemies of Jesus now sought to make the people demand that Pilate should order Him to be crucified. But Pilate said to them: "I find no fault in Him."

It was the custom with the Israelites that at the time of the Easter festival a prisoner should be set free. Pilate wished to make use of this opportunity to release Jesus. He caused a prisoner named Barabbas, who had been imprisoned for murder, and who looked like a savage in his chains, to be placed beside Jesus, the most beautiful of men, full of heavenly grace and dignity, and then asked the people: "Which shall I release to you, Barabbas, a murderer, and a rebel, or

Jesus whom they call the Christ?" Influenced by the enemies of Jesus, the whole populace cried with one voice: "Not this one! Away with Him! Release Barabbas!" Pilate, who would gladly have released Jesus, said: "But what then shall we do with Jesus?" Again they cried out all together: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said for the third time: "What wrong hath He done? I find no fault in Him deserving of death. I will, however, have Him scourged—and after that set Him free." Children, did Pilate act right? should a judge let an innocent person be scourged? What ought Pilate to have done? He did not release Jesus, but had Him led out to be scourged, although innocent. The soldiers conducted Jesus to the guard house, took off His clothes, bound Him to a pillar, and scourged Him. O dear children, what agony did the loving Jesus undergo then! These monsters scourged Him so unmercifully that the blood ran in streams from His body, that the flesh hung in shreds, and His whole body was covered with wounds. On whose account did Jesus undergo this fearful suffering of the scourging at the pillar? Never forget all your life long what He endured for love of us. *They scourged Him until the blood came.* What did they do to Jesus by order of Pilate?

Bad, cruel men take delight in ill-treating others, and this is what these soldiers did. Pilate had ordered them only to scourge Jesus, but in their inhumanity and cruelty they went much farther. After they had scourged Him, they began to mock Him, because He had called Himself a king. They put a red mantle upon Him, pressed a crown woven out of thorns upon His head, and instead of a sceptre they placed a reed in His right hand. Then they came up to Him—one after the other—bent the knee before Him, saluted Him mockingly and cried out: "Long live the King of the Jews!" Then they spat upon Him, struck His cheeks, tore the reed out of His hand, and struck Him over the head with it, so that the thorns penetrated deeper into His forehead and temples. Ah, what awful tortures Jesus must have suffered, and why, dear children? And Jesus suffered all this with the utmost patience. How we sometimes complain of a little headache. Think of the crown of thorns. How many of the thorns were broken whilst the crown was being pressed down upon His head and some of them entered through skin and flesh, so that the blood streamed down His sacred face. Never forget as long as you live that: *They pressed a crown of thorns upon His head.* What did the soldiers press upon His head

after the scourging? As often, dear children, as you see a picture of Jesus Christ with the crown of thorns, render your thanks to Him, for having undergone this suffering for love of you, and for allowing Himself to be crowned with the terrible crown of thorns.

Pilate then had the cruelly scourged and thorn-crowned Jesus led before the people and said: "Behold this man!"—as if to say, he is a man, why are you so unhuman to him? But the Jews cried out: "Crucify Him! Away with Him; away to the cross!" When Pilate saw that he could do nothing with the people and by his resistance would only excite them all the more, he mounted his throne and had a basin of water brought to him, wherein he washed his hands in the sight of all the people, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man! You are responsible!" But the whole people cried out: "May His blood come upon us and our children!" And then Pilate surrendered the innocent Jesus to his enemies to be crucified. My dear children! Do you not have pity with the sufferings of dear Jesus? Why did Jesus have to suffer these tortures? Will you promise to our beloved Saviour, never to offend Him by sin? What did Jesus suffer on the Mount of Olives? Who betrayed Him? What end did Judas find? Which disciple denied Jesus three times? Was Peter as bad as Judas? What did he do when Jesus looked at him reproachfully? What was the name of the Roman governor to whom Jesus was led? What did he let them do to Jesus, though he declared Him innocent? What did the inhuman soldiers press upon Jesus' head after the scourging? What was the name of the murderer whom the Jews preferred to Jesus? What did they cry out, that Pilate should do to Jesus? And what did Pilate finally do? The rest of this sad story, what happened further to our dear Jesus, I will tell you in our next lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

128. What great suffering did they inflict upon Him? They scourged Him until the blood flowed.

129. What did they press upon His head? They pressed a crown of thorns upon His head.

XLVI.

The Crucifixion.

To-day I will continue the history of the passion and death of our dear Lord. After Pilate had surrendered Jesus to His enemies, the soldiers now seized hold of Jesus, took off the purple mantle, put His own clothes on Him again, and led Him forth to be crucified. Dear children, the crucifixion was a terrible way of dying. Those who were condemned to death by crucifixion, were led to the place of judgment, and the cross, which was made of two heavy beams, was usually carried before them. Arrived at the place of execution, the condemned was thrown upon the cross, and the hands and feet firmly bound with cords, but sometimes they would be nailed to the cross, too. Here they remained hanging until they died, amid terrible sufferings. Now, when those who were crucified, lived too long, their arms and legs were broken, so that they might die all the sooner. Jesus was made to take the cross upon His shoulders, and He was obliged, surrounded by an immense crowd of people, to carry it Himself to the place of execution as if He were the greatest malefactor. Jesus had already suffered so much, that He alone could not possibly have carried it so far. The soldiers forced a passer-by, whose name was Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross after Jesus. When they came to Mount Calvary, they stripped Jesus of His garments, threw Him unmercifully upon the wood of the cross, and nailed Him to it. O children, what agony this must have been, when the iron nails pierced the veins, sinews, and tender bones of the hands and feet! How inexpressibly must Jesus have loved mankind that He should bear so many and such cruel sufferings! Pay particular attention, therefore, in the story of the passion of Jesus to this: *He suffered it patiently that they should nail Him to the cross.* What terrible suffering did Jesus bear patiently upon the cross? Who carried the heavy cross to Calvary? Who helped Jesus to carry it? What did the soldiers do with His garments? And what did they do after they had stripped Him of His garments? For whose sake did Jesus allow Himself patiently to be nailed to the cross?

After the soldiers had nailed Jesus upon the cross, they raised it slowly from the ground, carried it to the hole which had been dug for it, and let it fall in with terrible violence, so that all the limbs

of the crucified Jesus were shaken, all His bones dislocated, and the wounds in His hands and feet were torn open and shed abundant streams of blood. O children, what agony this must have been! And in the midst of these terrible sufferings Jesus hung for three hours upon the cross. His enemies mocked at Him, and said: He helped others, but He can not help Himself. If He is Christ, the chosen one of God, and the King of Israel, let Him descend now from the cross before our eyes, and we will believe in Him. He always trusted in God, He may now save Him, if He is so dear to Him! For He so often said: I am the Son of God. The soldiers, and even one of those who was crucified with Him, joined in this mockery. But Jesus prayed to God His Father with heavenly kindness and meekness: "Father, forgive them! They know not what they do!" In this way, dear children, Jesus showed us how we should behave to our enemies. What ought we to do to those who offend us? Yes, we ought to forgive willingly, and to love our enemies; return only good for evil, and pray for them that God may convert them. One of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus repented of his sins, and bore the suffering with patience as a punishment for his wicked deeds. He prayed to Jesus, and said: "Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom, remember me!" Jesus forgave this repentant sinner, and gave him this consoling assurance: "Verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and St. John, one of Jesus' disciples, and some pious women, had not forsaken Jesus, but followed Him to the place of execution. These faithful souls, filled with grief, stood at the foot of the cross, and had the most tender compassion for Jesus, whose terrible sufferings they witnessed. It seemed to His Mother in particular as if a two-edged sword pierced her heart. When Jesus saw His Mother and the disciple standing at the foot of the cross, He looked upon them both, and said: "Mother, behold thy son!" Hereupon He looked lovingly at John and said, while He looked at Mary: "Behold, thy Mother!" And from that moment St. John took Mary into his house, and took care of her as if she were his own mother.

All at once a terrible darkness spread itself over the whole earth. The sun was darkened, and shone no longer. All those who, until now, had mocked at Jesus, were frightened and silent. For three hours, until three o'clock in the afternoon, the darkness continued. Those were three terrible agonizing hours for Jesus. Every moment

the wounds caused by the nails grew larger and more painful, and His blood ran in streams upon the ground. And then when the agony had reached its height, Jesus cried out, full of confidence in God: My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me! At that same moment, the darkness began to vanish. The enemies of Jesus began to revile Him again. Jesus cried out, then: "I thirst!" A soldier handed Him a sponge, which had been steeped in vinegar, and placed it to His mouth that He might drink. After Jesus had tasted the vinegar, He cried out, with a loud voice: "It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" And with these words, bowing His head, He died.

And behold, at that same moment the earth quaked, the rocks were split in two, the graves gave up their dead, and the veil of the Temple was rent suddenly in twain from the roof to the ground. The captain of the guard who witnessed all these things, cried aloud, publicly: Verily, this was the Son of God!

Children, what happened to Jesus at last upon the cross? *He died upon the cross for love of mankind.* Look here at the image of the crucified Jesus! His hands and feet are pierced, His body streams with blood, the crown of thorns upon His head. For whose sake did Jesus bear all this? When Jesus bled patiently, like a lamb upon the cross, what did His enemies do? Of the two malefactors who were crucified with Jesus, what did one of them do? What did the other one do? Who stood beneath the cross? What did Jesus say to His Mother? What did He say to St. John? What took place upon the earth? How long did the darkness last? With what did Jesus quench His thirst? And what did Jesus cry out before He died? What happened upon earth when He died? What happened to the graves? And what took place in the Temple at Jerusalem? What did the captain say? Jesus had to suffer all this, dear children, so as to redeem us from sin. Oh, sin must be a terrible thing, because God punished our sins in such a dreadful way in His only-begotten Son. Now, what firm resolution are you going to make, that you may never commit what? No more sin then! Now, children, those who sin, crucify Jesus anew, and you do not want to do that. We ought much rather to love Jesus, obey His teaching, imitate His example, and be filled with gratitude toward Him. Then, dear children, I want to tell you how you can prove your gratitude to Jesus for His passion and death. I want to teach you how Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has taught us to thank Jesus for His bitter

passion and death. What am I holding in my hand? What color are the beads of this rosary? Are these not red beads? What color was the precious blood which Jesus shed for us? Children, now listen how we can offer our gratitude to Jesus for His most bitter passion and death, which is dearer to Him than a wreath of the most beautiful red roses. By saying the rosary devoutly, and reciting the five sorrowful mysteries, which represent to us, in five short sentences all the sufferings that Jesus endured for us. These five mysteries are:

I.—The prayer and bloody sweat of our Blessed Saviour in the garden.

II.—The scourging of our Blessed Lord at the pillar.

III.—The crowning of our Blessed Saviour with thorns.

IV.—Jesus carrying His cross.

V.—The crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will repeat these mysteries for you several times. What are the five sorrowful mysteries in which is briefly contained what Jesus suffered for us? Will you always say this beautiful devotion out of gratitude for the bitter passion and death of Jesus devoutly? Do this, my dear children, so that the bitter passion and death of Jesus may not be in vain for you or any of mankind.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

130. What terrible sufferings did He endure upon the cross? He patiently endured being nailed to the cross.

131. What took place at last upon the cross? He died upon the cross for love of mankind.

132. Why did Jesus die upon the cross? To redeem all mankind from sin, and to sanctify us all and make us happy.

133. What are the five sorrowful mysteries in which is briefly contained all that Jesus suffered for us? I. The prayer and bloody sweat of our Blessed Saviour in the Garden. II. The scourging of our Blessed Lord. III. The crowning of our Blessed Saviour with thorns. IV. Jesus carrying His cross. V. The crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

XLVII.

The Resurrection.

Dear children, you have heard how Jesus, our Redeemer, died in the most fearful agony upon the cross to deliver mankind from sin and hell. I will now tell you further what happened to Jesus.

When a person dies, what becomes of the corpse—of the dead body? This is what they did with the dead body of Jesus. They buried it. After Jesus died upon the cross, what was done with His corpse? *He was buried.* You will like to know, dear children, who buried the dead body of Jesus, and what took place then. Now, listen to this story with great attention.

Jesus did not even have a decent burial, but was buried at once with the two thieves on the place of execution. Now there lived at Jerusalem a well-known, rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. He was God-fearing and righteous, and in secret a disciple of Jesus. He now took courage, went to Pilate, and begged him for the body of Jesus. Pilate, after he found that Jesus was dead, granted Joseph's petition, and allowed him to take the corpse away. To make quite sure that Jesus was dead, one of the soldiers pierced the side of Jesus with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed therefrom, which was the surest sign that He was dead.

Here, dear children, you see in this crucifix the wound in the side of Jesus. How many wounds can we count on the most sacred body of Jesus? Yes, five; one in each hand and foot, and one in the side, without the numerous wounds which Jesus for love of us received in His body at the scourging. Pious Christians, dear children, often say a prayer in honor of the five sacred wounds. They say five Our Fathers out of love and gratitude to Jesus, who to redeem us bore such agonizing wounds. Joseph of Arimathea, and another pious man named Nicodemus, took the body of Jesus down from the cross, wrapped it in linen, and buried it in a new grave, which was hewn out of the rock in a garden. Hereupon they rolled a large stone to the entrance of the tomb, but the Jews sealed the stone and caused the grave to be guarded for three days, that, as they said, none of His disciples could come, steal the body, and then tell the people that He was risen from the dead. Now Jesus had prophesied that He would rise again upon the third day.

Now I want to hear, dear children, what you can tell me about what I have told you. After Jesus died upon the cross, what became of His dead body? Where was the body of Jesus immediately buried? Who laid Him in a new grave? What did these two pious men roll to the entrance of the tomb? And what did the Jews do? What had Jesus prophesied? On Good Friday a large crucifix is placed upon the ground in the church. Then pious Christians kneel down and kiss devoutly the hands and feet and the wound in the

side of Jesus. What prayer can you say upon this occasion and at other times in honor of the five sacred wounds? Will you do this? Yes, during your life often say these prayers, and thank your Redeemer that, for love of us, He suffered such agony from these wounds, and redeemed us all upon the tree of the cross.

Now, dear children, I am going to tell you what happened to the soul of Jesus when His body was laid in the grave. The soul of Jesus descended into Limbo, where the souls of all good men who had died from the time of Adam to the death of Jesus were detained. They could not enter heaven before Jesus had redeemed them from every sin. Jesus announced to the souls of the pious ancestors their redemption, for which they had so ardently waited through all those years. What rejoicing must have reigned among them. They were filled with gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving toward Jesus, who led them into heaven. What became of the soul of Jesus while His body lay in the grave? Who then were in Limbo? Why could not they enter heaven? Where did Jesus redeem mankind from their sins?

Children, when a father or mother dies, what do the children do then? Alas, this is often very sad to behold. I once buried the corpse of a mother who had left eight children behind her, and they all surrounded her grave. As the body was lowered into the grave, and the earth was thrown upon the casket, those poor children began to cry and sob. Whom had these children lost? What had their mother shown toward them while she lived? Would they ever receive any more kindnesses from her again? What did Jesus show toward His disciples as long as He lived? No father or mother can show such affection for their children as Jesus showed for His disciples. His disciples were very sad at the death of their Lord and Master. They mourned and wept for Him. And you must remember this about the disciples. What did the disciples of Jesus do at His death and burial? *His disciples mourned and wept for Him.* Had not Jesus told them that He would not remain in the grave? What consoling prophecy did He make to them about this? And this, His prophecy, was also fulfilled. Now listen attentively to the story of the Resurrection of Jesus.

The morning of the third day had just dawned. All at once there was a great earthquake. An angel of God descended from heaven, approached the grave, rolled back the stone, and seated himself upon it. His appearance was as dazzling as lightning, and his raiment was whiter than snow. The soldiers who were guarding the tomb

were so frightened that they fell to the ground as if they were dead, and afterward they ran away from the spot. But Jesus came forth from the tomb alive again.

I have, dear children, already told you many wonderful things from history, but is not this the greatest miracle, that Jesus, whom they had put to death three days ago, should now come forth from the grave alive? Now pay attention, and answer these questions. After Jesus was buried, what took place before three days had passed? *Before three days had passed Jesus came forth alive again from the grave.* Jesus not only had the power to raise the dead to life again, as He did the daughter of Jairus, and the young man of Naim, of whom I have already spoken to you, but He had also the power to give up His life of His own free will, and to take it back again. Children, should we be able to do this, to let ourselves be put to death, and then to come back to life? Who is Jesus Christ? And the Son of God can do all things that He wills. He is Almighty.

How much longer do you think you will live, N.? And you, N.? But what would happen if you should live to be a hundred years old? Must we all die? And it is so hard to die. That is why men fear death so much. Children, if it can not be avoided, and we have to die once, would you not like to rise like Jesus alive from the grave? Be glad! This will happen, just as Jesus has said: I shall rise again; and He did rise again. And He also said: You shall rise again! And this will come to pass at the day of judgment, when Jesus will awaken all mankind to a new life. Look, dear children, at this picture of Jesus upon the cross! His body is covered with blood and wounds, His countenance is pale and disfigured. Do you think that the body of Jesus looked in such a pitiable state after the Resurrection? O no, for Jesus Christ rose again with a glorified body, which was light and imperishable, and could no longer be wounded or put to death. In the same way all good people will rise again with a glorious and transformed body. Neither sorrow, nor sickness, nor death can ever more affect them. Jesus Christ has promised us this. You wish to rise again one day with a glorified body, do you not? But what must you be in this world, then? Will you be good, and remain good? Do this, that you may one day look forward to a glorious Resurrection!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

134. After Jesus died upon the cross what became of His dead body? It was buried.
135. What did the disciples do at His burial? His disciples mourned and wept.
136. After Jesus was buried what took place before three days had passed? Within three days he came to life again and rose out of the grave.

XLVIII.

Jesus Appears to the Apostles.

Now, dear children, how did the people know that Jesus was risen from the dead? The angel told it to them. Pious women, who had faith in Jesus and who loved Him, went in the early morning to His grave. They were troubling as to who should roll the stone away from the grave, but when they arrived they found that the stone had already been removed. When they entered the grave they could, of course, find nothing of the body of Jesus, but they saw a beautiful youth, clad in a flowing snow-white garment. It was an angel. This angel spoke to them pleasantly, and said: "Fear not! I know you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who has been crucified. He is no longer here. He has risen as He predicted. Come here and see the place empty where they laid the body of the Lord. Hasten and tell it to the Apostles." Who, then, told the pious women that Jesus had risen from the dead?

Maria Magdalen brought the news that the grave was empty to Peter and John, who hurried to the grave. They found it empty, save the winding-sheet which had been wrapped around the body of Jesus. And they were very sad. Two other disciples went on the same day on which Jesus had risen from the dead, to Emmaus, a place not far from Jerusalem. On the way they were joined by another man, a stranger, who asked them: "Why are you so sad? What have you been speaking about?" They answered: "Do you not know what has happened in these days?" But this stranger was Jesus, who spoke to them, and said: "What is it?" And they said: "We spoke about what happened concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Our chief priests have had him crucified. Some of our women, who went afterward to the grave, say that angels had appeared to them,

and had told them that He was living. Some of us went at once to the sepulchre, and found it empty. But Jesus Himself they did not see."

The stranger explained to them how all this had to happen thus, as God had foretold it through the prophets, that Jesus would have to suffer all this before entering into His glory. When they arrived at Emmaus, they asked the stranger to stay with them. When they were seated at the table, the stranger took the bread, blessed it, and breaking it, handed it to them as he had done at the Holy Supper. At the same moment they recognized that the stranger was Jesus Himself. But Jesus vanished out of their sight. They hurried back into the city, and brought the glad news to the other disciples. The disciples were gathered together in a large room, but had locked the doors for fear of the Jews. While they were talking together about all these things, Jesus stood suddenly among them in the center of the room and said to them: "Peace be with you!" They were nearly beside themselves with fear. At first they believed that it must be His departed spirit. Only Jesus said lovingly: "Fear not. It is I. Look at my hands and my feet. By these marks of the wounds, you will perceive that it is I." But the disciples had not yet recovered from their fright. Then Jesus asked: "Have you nothing to eat here?" They placed before Him a piece of baked fish and a little honey. He took it and ate some of it before them. Finally their fears were banished by His kindness, and their astonishment and joy were indescribable. Then He rebuked them for their incredulity, and explained to them that He had to suffer and undergo all this that everything which the prophets had foretold of Him might be fulfilled. Thereupon He vanished again from their sight. How did the disciples discover that Jesus lived again? To how many disciples did He appear on the road? Where were the disciples assembled when Jesus reappeared to them? What did Jesus do that they might not be afraid? And how did Jesus suddenly stand in the midst of His disciples? *He stood suddenly in the midst of His disciples full of divine glory.* And what were their astonishment and joy? *Their astonishment and joy were indescribable.* These two last answers I will repeat several times, that you may not easily forget them.

Dear children, every year we celebrate the remembrance of the Resurrection of Jesus by a festival which is called Easter. We rejoice, then, that Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, and that He promised us that we should also rise again one day from the dead.

The church is decorated with flowers on this day, the people pray and sing joyfully. Return thanks to Jesus with your whole heart, and make the firm resolution to lead a good life and never to offend God by sin, that you may hope one day to rise again with a glorified body and to rejoice with Jesus in heaven for all eternity. Do you wish to do this? Let us rejoice, then, that Jesus rose again from the dead.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

137. In what form did Jesus suddenly stand in the midst of His disciples? He stood suddenly in the midst of His disciples full of divine glory.
138. What were their astonishment and joy? Their astonishment and joy were indescribable.

XLIX.

Jesus Takes Leave of His Disciples.

You have learned, my dear children, how Jesus died on the cross for our sake. His disciples mourned and wept over Him. But, before three days had passed, He arose living from the grave. In divine majesty He suddenly appeared among His disciples, and their astonishment and joy were indescribable. This joy was increased by Jesus appearing frequently to the disciples, for He remained with them for forty days. How long did Jesus remain with His disciples after His Resurrection? *Jesus remained with them for forty days.* During these forty days He held intercourse with them, sat with them at table, and spoke with them of the kingdom of God. Could the risen Saviour have been more kind to His disciples? Listen, now, what happened at this time to one of these.

One of the Apostles, named Thomas, was not present when Jesus appeared to the disciples. As soon as he returned to them, they called out to him, full of joy: "We have seen the Lord!" But Thomas would not believe it, and he said to them: "Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." After eight days, the disciples were again assembled in the house, and Thomas was with them. There suddenly appeared, though the doors were closed, Jesus, and stood in their midst, and

said: "Peace be with you." Then Jesus turned to Thomas, and said: "Thomas, put in thy finger hither and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand and put it into my side, and be not incredulous, but believe." Thomas, filled with awe, sank down at the feet of Jesus and could say nothing but: "My Lord and my God!" But Jesus said to him: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."

Children, what was the name of the unbelieving disciple? Where did he want to put his finger? Where did he want to lay his hand? Did he do this? How could Jesus tell that he wanted to do this? Did Jesus praise or blame him for his unbelief? What did He say to Thomas? And of what men did Jesus say that they would be blessed? Children, did Jesus appear also to us? But do we not believe that He has risen? Of course we do! Have not the Apostles announced it to the whole world that Jesus has risen, and did they not suffer the most cruel martyrdom rather than to proclaim anything but what they knew to be true from their own knowledge, and do they not in consequence deserve our full belief? We, therefore, do not, in order to believe, like Thomas, want to see Jesus Himself, we do not need to put our fingers into the prints of the nails, nor our hands into His side, but we will believe what the disciples have said, because they are worthy of all belief.

After that, my dear children, Jesus appeared once more, where there were assembled more than five hundred faithful. When they saw Him, they fell down and adored Him. And when Jesus had spoken to them most lovingly, they all believed that He had risen. And now He commanded His Apostles most solemnly to teach mankind in His name, and He promised them that He would stand by them, and protect them unto the end of the world. To how many of His disciples did Jesus appear at one time? What did He command the Apostles to do?

After Jesus had, during these forty days, told His disciples everything He wanted them to do after His departure, He led them on the fortieth day upon a mountain. Children, I suppose you will be able to tell me the name of the mountain upon which Jesus commenced His passion, and where He suffered such agony that He broke out in a sweat of blood? Yes, it was the Mount of Olives, or Mount Olivet, and from this same mount He was now going to enter into His heavenly glory. Where did Jesus lead His disciples on the fortieth day? *He led them upon a mountain.*

When a son or daughter leaves the house of their parents to go into a strange country, what do they say to their relations and friends before they leave? In the same way Jesus took leave of His disciples before He left them and returned to His home in heaven. What did Jesus do with His disciples on the Mount of Olives? *He took leave of them.* My dear children, leave-taking is also a sad occurrence. It is particularly sad when a dying father or mother take leave of their children. But even when such a sad thing befalls us, we are not without consolation, because we know where all good people go to and meet after death. There they meet again, and will never be separated any more for all eternity. Therefore, dying parents in their last hours beg and implore their children to lead a good life, and avoid sin, so that when some day they, too, will die, they will go to heaven and meet their parents.

That the disciples, when Jesus took leave of them, were very sorry, I need not tell you. But Jesus is infinitely good. He had told them, even before His death, that they should not be downcast because He was going to leave them. And now, listen to the promise full of consolation which He gave them. He said: I will send you a consoler. I will send you the Holy Ghost. What did Jesus then tell His disciples even before His death about His going away? Even before His death He told them not to be downcast because He was going to leave them. To take the place of Himself, He would send them the Holy Ghost.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

139. How long did Jesus remain with His disciples after His resurrection? Jesus remained with them for forty days.
140. Where did He lead His disciples on the fortieth day? He led them up into a mountain.
141. What did He do there? He took leave of them there.

L.

The Promise of the Holy Ghost—The Ascension.

The word Holy Ghost, children, you have often pronounced, for instance, every time you may have made the sign of the cross. I have told you a great deal about God the Father, and about God the

Son. Now, would you like to hear something about God the Holy Ghost? Now, pay attention, and I will tell you what Jesus has taught us about the Holy Ghost.

Children, which are the two chief powers which God has placed in man's soul?

What can we do with our understanding? Is it as easy for us to know God as it was for our first parents before they sinned? What injury did our reason suffer through sin? It was enfeebled, obscured, as we can see in ourselves. We must take pains to learn of God, and if we do not do so we remain in ignorance. You know many things about God. Would you have known all this if I had not told you and taught you? Jesus taught His disciples for three years. They had listened to Him diligently and gladly, and now their beloved Teacher was about to leave them. This was very hard for them. Therefore, Jesus consoled them by promising to send them the Holy Ghost. And now hear how consolingly Jesus spoke to them of the Holy Ghost! He said: He will teach you all things, and remind you of all things which I have told you. Who, therefore, was to teach the Apostles after Jesus had left them? What did Jesus say of the Holy Ghost that he would do?

There are people who know a great deal about God and divine matters, and who can well distinguish between good and bad. Yet, in spite of this knowledge, most of the time they do evil instead of good. What is wanting in such people—reason? No, they have not the desire to do good. What has the will of man been inclined to ever since original sin? The same was the case with the disciples. They were inclined to evil. Though Jesus had told them everything they needed to know to become holy in this world and blessed in the next, yet they often made their Master very sad. They held angry discourses among themselves. Did Jesus teach them that? What did He teach them—how they should love each other? But, unfortunately, they did not do this. What evil deed did Judas commit? What evil did Peter do? And the Apostles knew very well that they were men inclined to evil, and they were sorry that Jesus, who had always encouraged and strengthened them to do good, was now to leave them. What is necessary, then, for poor human nature? And Jesus said that they would receive this from the Holy Ghost, He would strengthen them. Now there are two things that Jesus said the Holy Ghost would do for them. What are they? He would teach them and strengthen them. My dear children, the disciples

needed more than that. Jesus had had much to suffer before He entered into His glory in heaven, and so He predicted to His disciples that they would have to suffer and endure much in this world for His sake. But He demanded of them that they should not be sad at this, but rejoice, because for all they would have to suffer for Him, they would receive ample reward. But where is the man who can rejoice in his own heart, when he knows that he will have to suffer much? Are you not full of fear and anxiety when you know that you will have to endure something which will cause you great pain? Consequently, the disciples, too, must have felt afraid when they heard that they would have to suffer much, and that Jesus would leave them, so that they would have nobody to console them in their sufferings. But Jesus has provided for consolation in all sufferings, for He calls the Holy Ghost the Consoler, and He said: "It is well that I leave you, for if I did not go away the Comforter would not come to you. But when I shall leave you, I will send Him to you." What did Jesus teach that the Holy Ghost would do in their afflictions? Console them. He promised also that the Holy Ghost would teach them, fortify, and console them.

Children, Jesus consoled the disciples, too, and they were glad thereat, only Jesus was going to leave them. But Jesus taught them that the Holy Ghost would never forsake them, but always remain with them. Could the disciples expect anything more than that the Holy Ghost should always remain with them? You must pay great attention to this teaching of Jesus about the Holy Ghost. What did Jesus teach concerning the Holy Ghost? *That He would instruct them, fortify, and console them, and always remain with them.*

This, dear children, is what Jesus promised and taught His disciples before His death. Upon the mountain where He took leave of them, He repeated His promise once more, namely, that He would send them the Holy Ghost. He did not then leave mankind as orphans, but He cared for them lovingly. Jesus had promised the Holy Ghost to His disciples before His death. What did He say again to them upon the mountain? *He repeated this promise to them once more upon the mount.*

It was the custom in ancient times for pious fathers before they died and left this world, to bless their children. They prayed to God to bless their children, and grant them happiness, and God always heard the prayer of such parents, and blessed their children if they were good. Jesus loved His disciples far more than a father

can love his child. How, then, could He leave them without first of all blessing them? He stretched forth His hands over them, and gave them His blessing. And now, children, listen to what took place. While He was blessing them He ascended into heaven visibly before them. Higher and higher He ascended. At last there came a bright cloud, and hid Him from their sight. What took place after Jesus had blessed His disciples? *Thereupon He raised Himself up into heaven. He ascended ever higher and higher before their gaze, until a cloud hid Him from their sight.*

While His disciples were ardently gazing after Him where He had ascended into heaven, behold, suddenly, two angels in white raiment stood before them, and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why do you stand here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who has just been taken away from you up into heaven will one day descend again as you have seen Him taken up into heaven." They fell down and adored.

Dear children, could the leave-taking of Jesus, His departure out of the world have been more beautiful or more joyful? Rejoice, also, because you know that Jesus, your Redeemer, who died for you, and who has an infinite love for you, has ascended into heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. We now know for certain that there is a heaven, and that heaven is our true country. We shall only remain a few years in this world, and if we do good we shall, like Him, be one day taken up into heaven. It is often difficult to do right, then we must think of heaven, and say: It is good to be in heaven; therefore, I will gladly do that which is right. We shall often be tempted to do wrong. Think, then, of heaven! Why, children? Where will those go who do wrong? Heaven will be lost to them, then. You are little and young, but yet many of you have had to suffer already. Of what should we think when God sends us afflictions? Yes, of heaven. Suffering will only last a short while. Where will those go who bear it patiently? And it is good to be in heaven. We will pray devoutly to God that we may one day go to Jesus in heaven. In the Our Father, dear children, the word heaven occurs twice. We say: Our Father, who art in heaven. God, our Father, is in heaven, and we want to go to heaven, too, one day. Observe this petition: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We shall only go to heaven if we do the will of God upon earth as the angels do it in heaven. And that this may come to pass let us all say devoutly the Our Father.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

142. How had He consoled them before His death concerning His departure? Before His death He told them that they should not be sorrowful because He was going away from them; He would send the Holy Ghost to them in His stead.

143. What did Jesus teach them concerning the Holy Ghost? That the Holy Ghost would teach them, fortify and console them, and always remain with them.

144. Before His death, then, Jesus had promised the Holy Ghost to His disciples; did He not repeat this promise upon the mount? He repeated this promise once more upon the mount.

145. After He had blessed His disciples what took place? Thereupon He ascended into heaven. He rose before their gaze higher and higher, until a cloud hid Him from their sight.

THE HOLY GHOST.

LI.

The Holy Ghost Descends Upon the Apostles at Pentecost.

I told you, dear children, last time, how the disciples of Jesus beheld Him ascend into heaven. Tell me, what promise did Jesus repeat to them upon the Mount of Olives of whom He would send to them? You know that what God says is true, and that what He promises will be fulfilled. Who is Jesus Christ? Yes, He is the Son of God, God from all eternity, like the Father. How is everything that He says? And how is it with His promises? What did He promise to His disciples? You shall hear to-day how this promise was fulfilled. After the disciples of Jesus had beheld Him ascend into heaven, they left the mount and returned into the city of Jerusalem, where they remained together, for Jesus had commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there until the Holy Ghost should come to them. Ten days after the Ascension of Jesus, was the feast of Pentecost. The Apostles had chosen another companion in place of Judas, who was called Matthias, and they were all twelve assembled in an upper room of the house. Mary, also the Mother of Jesus, and many other of His followers were there, too. They prayed unanimously, and waited for the Holy Ghost. What did the disciples of Jesus do after His Ascension? *The disciples remained together, they prayed unanimously, and waited for the Holy Ghost.*

At nine o'clock on the morning of the feast of Pentecost, there suddenly arose a noise from heaven. Children, you have often heard the rushing of a mighty storm-wind? The disciples, who were all assembled in a room, heard all at once the rushing of a mighty wind, which filled the whole house. It was often known that a storm of wind had uprooted trees and even demolished houses, and that people had been buried in the ruins. The disciples were very much afraid of the Jews, and now, as they heard this noise, they listened anxiously, and looked to see what was coming. What did the disciples hear when they were all assembled in a room on the feast of Pentecost? *On the morning of the feast of Pentecost, as they were all assembled in a room, they heard all at once the rushing of a mighty wind.* When we hear anything, even if it is only a slight noise we are curious to know whence it comes, and what is the cause of it. We look in all directions, and are not satisfied until we really know the cause. When we know this, then we are satisfied. In the same way, dear children, the disciples immediately wanted to know the cause of this noise. All at once they beheld tongues of fire which descended upon every head. How astonished they must have been! Imagine if we were to see suddenly tongues of fire descend upon every head, we should certainly cry out in astonishment: What is this? What does it mean? But before the disciples could express their astonishment, they knew what those tongues of fire signified. Tell me once more, what did the disciples hear on the morning of the feast of Pentecost? What did they behold upon the head of each one? *They saw tongues of fire which descended upon each head.*

I have already told you that the disciples, before they had time to express their astonishment, knew what this signified. Children, this was the sign of the coming of the Holy Ghost. I told you before that Jesus had promised the Holy Ghost to His disciples. Now, pay attention, and I will tell you who the Holy Ghost is.

You know that there is one God, who created heaven and earth and all things. Tell me, briefly, everything that I have told you about God.

1. That He can make all things that He wills, etc. And how may we address God? Therefore, we say, when we make the sign of the cross: In the name of the Father. Whom did God the Father send into the world to make the wicked good again? What is the Son of God called? Where did Jesus Christ come into the world? God is

a spirit whom we can not see. What form, then, did God the Son take? Yes, the form of man. He became man, and lived among men for thirty-three years. Tell me, children, could Jesus Christ make anything that He willed? What miracles did He work? God the Son had, then, His attributes like God the Father. He is God from all eternity, like the Father.

The Holy Ghost also, whom Jesus had promised to His disciples, and who descended upon them in the form of fiery tongues, the Holy Ghost is God from all eternity, like the Father and the Son. Who, then, is the Holy Ghost? Now we have: (1) God the Father, (2) God the Son, (3) God the Holy Ghost. How many, then, are God? Who said three Gods? (This answer is usually given to this question.) Children, when your little brothers and sisters at home are asked how many Gods there are, what answer do they make? One God. That is their answer. How many divine Persons are there? What are they called? You see, you know this already. There is, then, only one God but three divine Persons. Who is the first divine Person? Who is the second? and who is the third? Who, then, is the Holy Ghost? Yes, the Holy Ghost is the third Person of the Godhead. Take good notice of this. He is God like the Father and the Son, and He has all the divine attributes. You will be able to answer my question as to what Jesus taught concerning the Holy Ghost? Yes, that He would instruct, fortify, console, and always remain with them. The Holy Ghost, therefore, is a teacher of truth, and a consoler.

Now, dear children, you will be able to tell me what the storm of wind and the fiery tongues signified, which descended upon the heads of the Apostles? *It was the sign of the coming of the Holy Ghost.*

The disciples heard the rushing as of a mighty wind, and they saw tongues of fire, but how did they know that this was the Holy Ghost? You have probably often heard the rushing of a wind-storm, and seen the lightning. Did you think that it signified the coming of the Holy Ghost? Now, dear children, the disciples knew and felt interiorly that the Holy Ghost had come. Where did they know and feel that the Holy Ghost had come? *They knew and felt interiorly that the Holy Ghost had come.* I will tell you the next time how this happened.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

146. What did the disciples do after the Ascension? The disciples remained together, and prayed and waited for the Holy Ghost.

147. What did they hear upon the morning of the feast of Pentecost, when they were all assembled in a room? On the morning of the feast of Pentecost, when they were assembled together in a room, suddenly they heard the rushing of a mighty wind.

148. What did they see upon the head of each one? They saw tongues of fire which descended upon each head.

149. What did the rushing wind and the tongues of fire signify? They were the signs of the coming of the Holy Ghost.

150. In what way did they know that the Holy Ghost had descended upon them? They knew and felt interiorly that the Holy Ghost had descended upon them.

THE HOLY GHOST.

LII.

The Holy Ghost Enlightens the Reason.

Jesus had His disciples with Him for three years, and He instructed them with the greatest of care, still there were many things that they did not understand in His teaching, so that He Himself once said to them: "I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth." (St. John xvi, 12, 13.) How comes it then, children, that men do not understand the truth so easily? Yes, this comes from the sin of our first parents, which we have inherited with all its sad consequences. Reason, man's understanding, was obscured. And it was the same with the disciples; their reason was obscured, and for this reason they could not understand everything that Jesus taught them. The Holy Ghost helped them in this deficiency. He enlightened their reason, and then they understood all truths. How did the Holy Ghost assist their reason? *The Holy Ghost enlightened their reason.* Children, if one out of your midst should suddenly begin to speak in a foreign language, would you not be surprised? You would all be astonished, and say: "Where did this child learn a foreign language, for it never had a teacher." The Apostles all came from Judea, and they spoke the language of their country. But after the Holy Ghost had descended upon them, they began to speak in different languages, according as it was given to each

one by the Holy Ghost. Was not this wonderful? And so thought all those who heard it.

There were staying at Jerusalem on account of the feast of Pentecost a great number of pious Israelites, from among all the known people of the earth. Now when they heard this mighty noise, which resounded from the house where the Apostles were, through the whole city, they, and a crowd of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, greatly frightened, assembled before the house of the Apostles. When, in addition to this, each one heard the Apostles speak in the language of his particular country, they were still more afraid. What is this? said one to another. Behold, all those who are speaking are from Galilee. How is it then that each one of us can understand his mother tongue? We can all hear them in our language, extolling the great works of God. Children, who taught the Disciples to speak foreign languages? Yes, the Holy Ghost. What assistance was He to their understanding?

Children, what is the great commandment of love? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart; now if a person says that he loves God with his whole heart, but he does not do the will of God, his heart rejoices in money, eating and drinking, whereby he often does wrong, which is displeasing to God, does such a person love God with his whole heart? No, dear children! and this is what many persons do: with their hearts they love evil more than that which is good. This also comes from original sin. For what injury did the will of man suffer therefrom? He was incited to evil. The Holy Ghost, the third person of the Godhead, will assist us, and fortify our wills, and give us strength to do all good. Before the disciples had received the Holy Ghost, they were not without faults; they were afraid and weak in doing good; but they became very different men through the Holy Ghost. He gave them strength to do good. And because they were suddenly conscious of a new desire and power within them to do good, they thereby recognized interiorly that the Holy Ghost had come upon them. What then did the Holy Ghost operate in the weak wills of the disciples? *He gave them strength to do good.* You will understand this better from the following story:

At the last supper Jesus had said sorrowfully to His Disciples: "Verily, I say unto you that one of you will betray me." He also told them beforehand that they would all be scandalized at

Him, and that they would forsake Him. Then Peter said: "And if they should all be scandalized at Thee, I will not be scandalized. I am ready to go with Thee to prison, and if I must die with Thee yet would I not deny Thee." But what took place? In the court yard of the high priest he denied Jesus, His Master, three times. He even insisted with oaths and assurances that he did not know Jesus; that he was no disciple of His. Behold, children, how weak is man to do good. Peter did not wish to deny Jesus, but yet he did it out of fear of a servant maid. But now hear what happened after the Holy Ghost had descended upon Peter, and you will see that he was an entirely new man.

In the city of Jerusalem, whose inhabitants had crucified Jesus, and who hated and persecuted His disciples, Peter, fortified by the Holy Ghost, came out of the house and preached with a loud voice that Jesus, whom they had crucified, was the Son of God, who was risen from the dead, and by the power of God exalted in heaven, and had sent the Holy Ghost as He had promised. His sermon so penetrated the hearts of his hearers that a large multitude listened to his words, and on that same day three thousand persons were baptized and became disciples of Jesus. Who gave this strength and this courage to Peter? What then did the Holy Ghost give to the weak wills of the disciples? So long as the Holy Ghost had not descended upon the disciples they feared sufferings, and contradictions. They had all promised not to forsake their Lord and Master, but to go with him to prison and to death. Did they keep their promise? O, no, when the soldiers and men came to take Jesus a prisoner, they all fled, and forsook Jesus. But, children, they were not so timid and afraid after the Holy Ghost had descended upon them; for the Holy Ghost filled their hearts with heavenly joy. With what did the Holy Ghost fill their hearts? *He filled their hearts with heavenly joy.* The Holy Ghost filled the hearts of the disciples with heavenly joy, even in the midst of the greatest sufferings and pain. After the descent of the Holy Ghost the apostles preached without fear in the temple at Jerusalem, that Jesus Christ, whom the Jews had crucified, was the Son of God, and the Redeemer of the world. Many believed, were baptized and became Christians. When the Scribes, Pharisees, and high priests, who were the enemies of Jesus, saw this they were beside themselves with anger. They ordered the Apostles to be thrown into prison, forbidding

them to preach about Jesus Christ. Then Peter said: "We must obey God more than man." Then the Apostles were scourged and beaten with rods. Children, was this right? What do people do when they are beaten? The Apostles did not cry, for they endured the scourging for Jesus' sake, not for any wrong they had done; they rejoiced to be able to suffer for the love of Jesus. Who filled their hearts with heavenly joy even in sorrow and suffering? After being scourged they went their way full of joy that they had been accounted worthy to suffer ignominy for the love of Jesus, and they ceased not to teach daily in the temple and in the houses, and to announce the joyful tidings about Jesus Christ.

When Jesus Christ was born in the stable at Bethlehem what beautiful song did the angels sing then? And what did the good shepherds do when they found the child Jesus in the crib? Yes, they glorified and praised God. And this, dear children, is what the Apostles did. Their hearts were filled with joy and gratitude; because the Holy Ghost had come, they, too, began to praise and magnify God. They had no longer any fear of proclaiming publicly and with a loud voice the great works of God, or to praise and magnify Him. What did the Apostles, who were filled with the Holy Ghost, begin to do? *They began to praise and magnify God aloud.*

Now I will see if you have clearly understood everything that I have explained to you to-day. What did the disciples do after the Ascension of Jesus? What did they hear in the morning of Pentecost when they were all assembled in the room? What did they see upon the head of each one?

What did the rushing of the wind and the fiery flames signify? In what way did they especially know and discover that the Holy Ghost had descended upon them? What did the Holy Ghost operate in their reason? And what in their will? With what did He fill their hearts? What did the Apostles begin to do in a loud voice? You see, children, here in this picture a representation of the descent of the Holy Ghost. In the centre is Mary, the Mother of God, surrounded by the Apostles. Do you see the Holy Ghost in the form of a fiery tongue upon the head of each one?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

151. What did the Holy Ghost operate in the understanding of the Apostles?
The Holy Ghost enlightened their understanding.
152. What did He give to their weak wills?
He gave them strength to do good.
153. With what did He fill their hearts even in sufferings?
He filled their hearts with heavenly joy.
154. After the Apostles had received the Holy Ghost what did they begin to do with a loud voice?
They began to praise and magnify God.

LIII.

Meaning of the Forms under Which the Holy Ghost Appeared.

You know, dear children, who the Holy Ghost is, how in the midst of the rushing as of a mighty wind He descended in the form of fiery tongues upon the disciples. You will perhaps want to know why the Holy Ghost appeared in this form? Pay attention, then, and I will explain it to you.

At night it is dark, and if the moon does not shine, and the stars are covered with clouds, we cannot see anything, although we have eyes. If at that time a father or mother were to ask a child to go into a room and fetch something, would the child be able to find it in the dark? What must that child have so as to be able to find that for which it was sent? Yes, a light. And what is a light? It is a flame of fire. Of what use is a fire on a dark night? The fire gives light. Remember, then, that this is the first good quality of fire, that it gives light.

What is it that shines and lights up the earth? Right. Can you see on a dark night? When the sun rises, however, it shines upon the whole world with its golden rays. O what an eternal night the world would be without the sun, an impenetrable darkness! What color is this? And this? Could you distinguish it at night, too? But you have the same eyes at night as you have in the daytime, why could you not see it? I tell you so much about God, and you hear and understand me, do you not? Now if you

were to bring some very little children here, who were not yet a year old, with what would they be able to see me? With what would they be able to hear me? But would they be able to understand what I told them about God? And why not? Children, their reason is too weak yet, they could not understand the meaning of my words. You are older and more sensible. You can understand the meaning of my words with your reason.

O, dear children! when we, too, hear and read the teaching of Jesus Christ, and His words, we are like those little babies, our reason is much too weak to understand their meaning; therefore it is necessary for us to be assisted by the Holy Ghost. What did He work in the understanding of the disciples of Jesus? We also receive the same benefit from Him, He enlightens our reason. Do you see now why the Holy Ghost appeared under the form of fiery tongues? He wished thereby to point out to men that the same benefit rendered by the fire to the eye of the body, He will render to the eye of your soul, to your reason. Fire lights earth that we may see, the Holy Ghost enlightens our understanding that we may see and know everything that is true and good. Remember then what the meaning was of the fiery tongues. I will repeat it for you several times. *As fire distributes light, so does the Holy Ghost enlighten our reason.*

Fire, children, contains another useful quality, which is especially useful in winter. In winter when it is very cold what do you do when you enter school or a room? Why do you go near the stove? What makes the stove warm? This is the second useful quality which fire has, fire heats. Is it necessary to make a fire in the stove in summer time? What makes it so warm then that we even have to perspire? The sun is something very useful! In winter everything is covered with ice and snow, and it is so bitterly cold you cannot stay out doors with comfort. But in the spring time if the sun shines so warm and cheerfully, the snow and ice melts, leaves and buds burst forth, and everything begins to be green and to grow; you are then glad and happy, and jump and run for joy. Thus does the Holy Ghost warm your and all our hearts, fills them with joy, and gives to everything good therein growth and increase. The Holy Ghost therefore appeared under the form of fire, because He wished to signify thereby: that as fire warms the body so does He warm your hearts, and gives them strength to do all good. Observe then the

second benefit which the Holy Ghost grants us, and which is signified by the fire. *As fire warms, so does the Holy Ghost warm our hearts to do good.*

Now what did the rushing of the wind signify at the coming of the Holy Ghost? The air, children, gives life. If we were to take a flower or plant and place it in a suffocating cellar, it would soon wither, and finally it would die; but if it were placed again in the fresh air it would revive. Air is absolutely necessary for everybody, and if we were to be deprived of fresh air it would have a very bad effect upon our health; this is noticeable in those persons who, on account of some offence, have been imprisoned where they do not obtain fresh air; their faces become pale and they look sickly. Air is necessary for us that we may live. Without seeing it, we inhale it every instant. The rushing of the wind, therefore, at the coming of the Holy Ghost signified that: *As air gives life, and as without it we could not exist, neither can we live a God-pleasing life without the Holy Ghost.* The disciples could not see the Holy Ghost; the signs of His coming, however, were typified in the most beautiful manner, and showed what benefits the Holy Ghost would grant to them and to us.

Children, have you ever seen a picture wherein the Holy Ghost was represented, not in the form of fiery tongues, but in the form of a dove? This is how the Holy Ghost is usually represented. You will like to know why the Holy Ghost is represented in the form of a dove? I will now tell you.

St. John the Baptist, who received his name because he baptized repentant sinners in the river Jordan, was sent by God to prepare mankind for the coming of Jesus Christ. He himself did not know Jesus, but it had been promised to him that: The one upon whom the Holy Ghost shall descend in visible form, He it is who baptizes with the Holy Ghost. Jesus came out to John at the river Jordan and was baptized by him. As soon as Jesus was baptized He came out of the river and prayed. And behold—the heavens were opened above Him. The Holy Ghost hovered visibly—in the form of a dove—over Him, and rested upon Him. At the same time a voice was heard from heaven: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!

Dear children, as the rushing of the wind and the fiery tongues at the coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost had a beautiful meaning, so did this form of the dove under which the Holy Ghost de-

scended upon Jesus have a beautiful meaning. The dove is an image of purity, and we say of a pure, pious soul, it is as pure as a dove; but, unfortunately, by original sin, man has lost this purity; every man when he comes into the world is stained, soiled with this original sin, and then it often happens to us in this life that we fall into sin because we do not avoid evil sufficiently, and then we soil the robe of innocence of our soul. But by the Holy Ghost we have been purified and from sinful men are made sanctified. To signify this the Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. In the whole of nature there is no more delightful and graceful picture than that of a gently hovering dove. The dove is pure, gentle, guileless, without deceit and falsehood. Pure, gentle, guileless, without deceit, innocent, filled with noble simplicity, without pretension, does the soul become through the Holy Ghost, whom Jesus will send to all those who believe in Him. When, therefore, you see the Holy Ghost represented in the form of a dove, or in the form of fiery tongues, you must not think that the Holy Ghost is a dove or a fire.

You have now heard who the Holy Ghost is, how He descended upon Jesus and His disciples, and what graces He granted to them; next time I will tell you something we all have to thank the Holy Ghost for.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

155. What did the form of the fiery tongues signify at the coming of the Holy Ghost?

As fire gives light, so does the Holy Ghost enlighten our reason; as fire warms, so does the Holy Ghost enkindle our hearts to do good.

156. What was signified by the rushing of the wind?

Air gives life, without air we could not live, neither can we live good lives without the Holy Ghost.

LIV.

The Holy Ghost Sanctifies Us in Holy Baptism.

My dear children: Before Jesus Christ left the world He gave to His disciples the command: To go and teach all nations, and to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And the Apostles did this. They went into the whole world and preached the Gospel. Many persons believed in Jesus Christ and were baptized—they became Christians. And we also are Christians, are we not? How, then, did we become Christians? I will now tell you about this.

When you were born, and whilst you were still very little babies, you were taken to church to receive Holy Baptism. Like all mankind, you were stained with original sin when you came into this world; you were, therefore, not pleasing to God, and you could never enter into Heaven. By Holy Baptism, however, we are delivered from original sin, and all other sins, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Those only who believe in Jesus Christ can be baptized. Can a little infant say: I believe in Jesus Christ? For this reason your parents sought a neighbor or friend to be your sponsors. The sponsors answer in the child's name when the priest asks. Now listen to what your God-parents promised and vowed in your name in Holy Baptism.

The priest asks: N., dost thou renounce Satan? Sponsors: I do renounce him. Priest: And all his works? Sponsors: I do renounce them. Priest: And all his pomps? Sponsors: I do renounce them. Priest: Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth? Sponsors: I do believe. Priest: Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, who was born into this world and suffered for us? Sponsors: I do believe. Priest: Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting? Sponsors: I do believe. At last the priest asks: N., wilt thou be baptized? Sponsors: I will; and then the child is baptized. The priest pours water on its head, and says: N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Now hear what great graces we obtain in Baptism. If you are dirty what do you use to cleanse yourself with? Water has the property of cleansing some

thing that has become stained or soiled. By the pouring of the water upon the child's head is signified: as water cleanses the body, so does the Holy Ghost cleanse the soul of man. With what, then, can we cleanse our bodies? And who cleanses the soul? This cleansing takes place in Holy Baptism. Whilst the water is being poured upon the child's head, the Holy Ghost cleanses it interiorly from original sin, and now dwells in the child. Now a child of man who has been cleansed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost from sin, is it pleasing or displeasing to God? Observe then, by Holy Baptism, we are delivered from original sin, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, become agreeable to God, and members of the Catholic Church. Are not these infinitely great graces? If I ask you what blessings we owe to the Holy Ghost, you must answer: *The Holy Ghost has sanctified us in Holy Baptism.* He did not, indeed, appear visibly at our baptism, but in an invisible manner. Jesus Himself promised us this. Would you like to see how the Sacrament of Baptism is administered? You should then go into the church the next time an infant is baptized, and you can see this holy act with your own eyes. But you must be quiet and respectful the while! Yet the grace which we receive in Holy Baptism does not save us, if we lose it again by sin. You must know dear children, that in Holy Baptism a white linen cloth is placed upon the child, when the Priest says: N., receive this white garment, and see that thou carry it without stain before the judgment-seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life. Amen. We become pure as a white garment by Holy Baptism. Now, if we are not very careful with a white garment what may happen to it? Our souls, too, can become soiled again after Holy Baptism, particularly if we are not careful to preserve our innocence; if we obey the temptations of the evil one and sin. And again it is the Holy Ghost who protects us from evil and assists us to lead a good and holy life. Listen attentively, then, dear children, to His inspirations. When an interior voice says: Do not do that, it is wrong: or, do this, it is good and pleasing to God, listen to these inspirations; for they proceed from the Holy Ghost. You should also frequently invoke the Holy Ghost that He may grant you the grace to enlighten your understanding and move your heart to do good. What, then, should we do in order to lead a holy life? *We should listen attentively to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, and frequently invoke His aid.*

Be diligent in this, dear children, and you will receive untold graces from the Holy Ghost. I will now tell you many things that the Holy Ghost operated in the Apostles, whereby you may see that the Holy Ghost is God from all eternity, and possesses all the divine attributes. Tell me what miracles did Jesus work? The Holy Ghost worked just such miracles through the Apostles.

During the days of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost had descended upon the Apostles, Peter and John went up into the Temple at three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the usual hour of prayer. At one of the principal doors of the Temple there sat a poor man who was lame from his birth, and as the people entered the Temple, he begged an alms. He asked Peter and John for an alms. Peter and John stood still and looked at him, and Peter said: Look at us; the man looked up at them joyfully. Then Peter said: Gold and silver have I not; but what I have that will I give to thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth arise and walk! And behold, he arose, and could walk, and he went into the Temple with them; and he walked about and leaped for joy, and he praised God with a loud voice which resounded through the whole Temple.

At another time, a man and a woman named Ananias and Saphira told a lie to St. Peter; but enlightened by the Holy Ghost Peter perceived it instantly, and said: Ananias, why hast thou let thy heart be seduced by Satan to lie against the Holy Ghost? Behold, thou hast not lied against men, but against God. As Ananias heard these words he fell to the ground, and died upon the spot. The same thing happened to his wife Saphira; she also fell to the ground and died. Children, be careful to avoid all lies and untruths, for those who resist the truth commit a sin against the Holy Ghost, who is the teacher of all truth. Though they may not be punished with temporal death, a terrible chastisement awaits them in eternity.

Peter once entered the city of Lydda; here he met a man whose name was Aeneas, and who was a paralytic, and had not been able to leave his bed for eight years. Peter approached his bed and said kindly and cheerfully to him: Aeneas! Jesus Christ heals thee. Arise! Instantly he arose, went about, and ceased not to rejoice and to praise Jesus Christ.

In the city of Joppe a young woman called Tabitha, who was a great friend of the poor, had died. Peter knelt down and prayed. Then he turned toward the corpse and said: Tabitha, arise! thereupon she opened her eyes, looked at Peter—and sat up. Through-

out Joppe this act caused great astonishment and many believed in the Lord.

These and many other miracles were performed by the Apostles after the Holy Ghost had come down upon them. They listened to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, led a holy life, and are now in Heaven. That is where we all wish to go, dear children: listen then to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, invoke His assistance and His blessing. He can help us, because everything happens as He wills. He will help us, for He gives us so many good gifts; but He knows, too, what is really best for us, for nothing is hidden from Him. He knows everything.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

157. What blessing do we owe to the Holy Ghost?
The Holy Ghost sanctified us in Holy Baptism.
158. What must we do to live holily?
We should listen to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, and ask Him frequently for His graces.

LV.

There is but One God; but There Are Three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Dear children: you have heard many things about the good God: of the Father in heaven; of His beloved Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I have told you that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; is there, therefore, more than one God? Right, there is only one God. But how many Divine Persons are there? and what are these three Divine Persons called? Which of you can tell me which is the greatest, the Father, the Son or the Holy Ghost? Children, these three Persons are one. Indeed, we cannot understand how this is possible; it is to us a mystery, which we call the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. And now I will tell you a story about this.

St. Augustine was walking once on the seashore, and he was thinking how it could be possible that there was only one God, and yet there were three Divine Persons; he wanted to fathom the mys-

tery of the Most Blessed Trinity. As he was walking along by the sea, he saw a little boy who was pouring water from the sea with a little shell into a hole. St. Augustine asked the boy kindly what he was doing; the boy answered: to pass the time I am pouring the water of the sea into this hole. The Saint replied, smilingly: you are working in vain, for you will never be able to accomplish that. The little boy answered: I could sooner pour the sea into this hole than that you could understand the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. At these words the boy vanished, for it was an angel from heaven. The Saint, however, thanked God that he had instructed and admonished him in his goodness, and he believed with a still deeper humility in the Most Blessed Trinity, although he could not comprehend how it was possible that there was only one God and yet there were three Divine Persons. Children, we too, will always believe with humble hearts in the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. Take notice now of this question: As the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is God, is there, therefore, more than one God? *There is but one God; but there are three Divine Persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. These three persons are one.* Although we cannot understand with our reason how it is possible that there is only one God, and yet there are three Divine Persons, still we can rejoice all the more over it that there are Three Persons; and why, children? If a good friend makes you a present of something which gives you a great deal of pleasure, as often as you hear the name of your benefactor mentioned, what sentiments would fill your heart, joyful or sad ones? You would always be reminded of the present which you had received, and it would be a pleasant remembrance to you, would it not? Have we not received any benefits from God? Who, then, created us? What great kindness did God the Father show you? Without His goodness you would not be in existence; you have to thank him for your life and being; are you not glad at this? Who redeemed you? We should all have been eternally lost if the Son of God had not become Incarnate and redeemed us upon the cross by His bitter passion and death. Who sanctified you in Holy Baptism? We have then to thank each one of the three Divine Persons for a blessing. What blessing do we owe to God the Father? *God the Father created us.* What blessing do we owe to God the Son? *God the Son redeemed us.* And what to the Holy Ghost? *The Holy Ghost has sanctified us.*

We should thank God frequently for these three greatest blessings: for creation, redemption and sanctification.

Our first parents, as you know, had two sons. What were their names? Which one was good and which was wicked? Still God had shown nothing but kindness to Cain, and blessed his labors in the field; but in spite of this what great sin did Cain commit? Can murder be agreeable to God? Was Cain a good or a bad child towards his Father in Heaven? Yes, he was a very wicked, godless child; and, therefore, he was punished and rejected by God. Never be so ungrateful towards your Father in Heaven as to offend Him by sin, but prove your gratitude towards Him by being always good children of your Father in Heaven. How ought we to show our gratitude to God the Father? *We should always be the good children of our Father in Heaven.*

The Son of God, Jesus Christ, who redeemed us, had twelve disciples whom He taught and chose as His Apostles. What was the name of the disciple who did not obey Jesus, and who later even sold Him for thirty pieces of silver? This Judas was a very ungrateful man, but how was his ingratitude punished? He hanged himself, and is now eternally lost, a victim of perdition. You do not want to resemble the ungrateful Judas? *Be then always obedient disciples of Jesus our Lord.*

Jesus went once into the Temple of Jerusalem, and there He saw in the entrance a number of buyers and sellers, who disturbed the people at their prayers, and by their actions desecrated the Temple of God. Then Jesus took a scourge and drove them from the Temple, whilst He said: My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. Are we not allowed to do business in the church, to make a noise and talk loudly? Whose house is every church? That is why all our churches are called the houses of God, because God dwells therein, and those who do wrong in the church desecrate the Temple of God, and will be terribly punished. Who was poured out upon us in Holy Baptism? The Holy Ghost dwells within us, as in a Temple. For this reason our heart should be always pure and holy—a worthy Temple of the Holy Ghost. How should we show our gratitude to the Holy Ghost? *Our heart should be always pure and holy—a Temple of the Holy Ghost.*

You have been taught at home to do everything in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. You will now

understand these words better than you did before. Do this now more willingly and zealously. Be always good children of the Father in Heaven, obedient disciples of Jesus our Lord, and keep your heart pure and holy—a Temple of the Holy Ghost. What did the disciples do after they were enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and understood everything clearly that Jesus had told them? You, too, should praise and glorify God, who has granted you the great grace of being instructed in the Catholic Church, where you have learnt so many things about God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Give, therefore, glory to God, and praise and extol Him, especially by saying devoutly with grateful and joyful hearts the following prayer, which many of you know already: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

St. Peter believed in Jesus Christ, and in everything that He taught; but what did he do three times in the courtyard of the high priest, for fear of a maid-servant? Alas, he denied Jesus three times. Children, you all believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. You will, however, sooner or later go amongst people who have lost faith, who no longer serve God and keep His commandments, but who lead a godless life. Persons like this would gladly make other persons bad, that they might lose their faith and be led into vice. If you ever find yourselves with such persons, do not listen to them, but fly their company. Say to yourself that you will not deny God, but confess and love Him; and so that every Catholic Christian should confess His faith often and with a willing heart, our holy Church has ordained that we should often make the sign of the cross. If you then see any one make the sign of the cross, what do you know, then, that He believes in? Yes; and even if you don't hear him say: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Imitate, my dear children, the example of the Saints, and make often the sign of the cross—when you rise in the morning and when you go to bed in the evening, before and after every prayer, and particularly when you are in danger and temptation.

You have come into the world in the name of God, and in the name of God you will leave it. What will be carried before you when you are taken to the cemetery, and what is planted upon every Catholic grave? The cross; it will be the sign of the coming of Christ on the last judgment day.

Therefore, hold the cross alway in grand honor, thank God for your creation, redemption and sanctification as often as you make the sign of the cross. Love him who has redeemed us on the cross, and join with joy and thankfulness in the prayer: "We adore Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, for by Thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the whole world."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

159. As the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is God, is there therefore more than one God?

There is but one God; but there are three divine Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These three Persons are one.

160. What blessing do we owe to God the Father?

God the Father created us.

161. What blessing do we owe to God the Son?

God the Son redeemed us.

162. And what to the Holy Ghost?

God the Holy Ghost sanctified us.

163. How should we show our gratitude to God the Father for this?

We should always be good children of our Father in heaven.

164. How should we thank God the Son for this?

We should always be obedient disciples of Jesus our Lord.

165. And how should we show our thanks to the Holy Ghost?

Our heart should be always pure and holy—it should be a Temple of the Holy Ghost.

166. What is that prayer called with which we praise and extol the Triune God?

The Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

LVI.

CONCLUSION.

The Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.

Dear children: You see this rosary? Do you like it? There are two others. What color has this one? White. And this? Red. And this? Golden. In the same way we find in the garden white roses, red roses, and roses which have the color of gold, namely, yellow roses. The white rose is on account of its pure, white color the symbol of purity and innocence. Whose life was on account of its purity like a white rose? who was always pure from every sin, and has given the children such a beautiful example? Like Jesus

and His Mother, the Blessed Virgin, we should always strive to lead a pure, innocent life, so that our life should in purity be like a white rose. But we are weak creatures, inclined to evil. Who can help us to an innocent life? If God can help us to it then we must pray to Him for it with our whole heart. What prayer did the Blessed Virgin Mary teach us? What are the names of the joyful mysteries of the rosary? They remember, therefore, the most joyful moments in the early life of our Saviour. If we contemplate them attentively and pray with devotion, they will help us also to a pure and innocent life.

But even the purest must be tried by sufferings and adversities of all kinds to see whether he loves God above all, and whether there is nothing that can separate him from God. Let me tell you a story about this.

Many, many years ago there lived a man by the name of Job. This man was simple and honest, feared God and kept away from all evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and his property consisted of 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen and 500 asses. He also had many servants, and he was highly esteemed amongst his countrymen.

To prove the piety and virtues of Job God permitted that the devil should tempt him with sufferings of all kinds. The first messenger of misfortune came to Job, and said: The oxen were ploughing and the asses were feeding beside them, and the Sabeans rushed in and took all away and slew the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell thee. And while he was yet speaking another came, and said: The fire of God fell from Heaven, and striking the sheep and servants, has consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell thee. And while he was yet speaking, there came another, and said: The Chaldeans have made three troops and have fallen upon thy camels and taken them; moreover, they have slain thy servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell thee. He was yet speaking, and behold, another came in, and said: Thy sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their elder brother. A violent wind come on a sudden from the desert and shook the four corners of the house, and it fell upon thy children, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell thee. Children, were not these many misfortunes? To lose all one's possessions and one's children all at once is terrible, indeed. Let us see how Job bore his misfortune.

Then Job rose up and rent his garments, and having shaven his head, fell down upon the ground and worshipped, and said: "Naked came I into this world and naked shall I return; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; as it has pleased the Lord, so it is done; Blessed be the name of the Lord." In all these things Job sinned not by his lips, nor spoke he any foolish thing against God. Children, was this not a very pious man? Listen to what further happened to him.

To further prove the faithfulness of Job, God permitted that he was afflicted by Satan with a grievous ulcer from the sole of his foot to the top of his head. And he took a potsherd and scraped the diseased matter, sitting on a dunghill. And his wife said to him: Dost thou still continue in thy simplicity? Bless God and die. And he said to her: Thou hast spoken like one of the foolish women; if we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil? And in all these things Job did not sin with his lips.

You have heard then, children, that Job served God and loved Him in evil as well as in good days. He showed that even the greatest sufferings could not rob him of his faith, his hope, and his love for God. God was so pleased with this that he returned everything to him twofold. How did you like this story, children? In whom shall we have confidence in our sufferings and pain? Yes; and God will not forsake us and will help us.

During your young lives, my dear children, you have not learned to know much of suffering and crosses; but as you grow older you will learn of them more and more. Therefore, get accustomed in your young days to do everything for the love of God, and to suffer for the love of God, then you will bear the greatest suffering, even death, with patience and submission to God's holy will. Did not Jesus suffer also? Tell me in five short sentences all that Jesus has suffered. The Blessed Virgin Mary has taught man to contemplate in the prayers of the rosary the bitter sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, and to follow his example. In what can we recognize Jesus' love for mankind the most? What did he shed on the cross for the love of us? What color has blood? Name a flower which also has red color? Now, children, as white is the symbol of purity, so is red the symbol of love. No one has a greater love than he who will give his life for his friend. And what did Jesus do for us? Therefore, let our love to Him glow like a red rose, and let us be

ready to even shed our blood for the love of Him; as has been done by so many martyrs. What means the white color of the rose? And what the red? And now let us consider the yellow or golden rose.

When gold is found it is so mixed with other substances that if you were to find it you would not recognize it and pick it up. What, then, makes gold so glittering and pure? It is thrown into an oven where there is a big fire. There it melts in the great heat, and is separated from the dross, and comes forth as pure and massive gold.

Dear children, God treats us in a similar way. We are afflicted with so many weaknesses, bad inclinations and sins, that God wants to help us out of this impurity, and sends us sufferings and adversities of all kinds, which if suffered for the love of God, purify and clean man like the burning oven does the gold. And so as to make us submit with patience to this purifying process, God has promised us something which is more glorious and worth more than all the gold of the world, that is, heavenly bliss.

You have all seen the rays of the sun? These rays are generally compared with the glitter of gold, as they are generally called the golden rays of the sun. In the same way, the glory remembered in the glorious mysteries of the rosary is compared with a golden rose. For the bliss and glory of Heaven we can only compare with the most precious thing we have on earth—that is, with the value and beauty of gold. I will now teach you these mysteries; they contain in five short sentences the bliss and glory of Jesus and His blessed Mother into which they entered after their death.

What happened on the third day after Jesus was buried? How did Jesus rise from the dead? After the *Resurrection* Jesus remained forty days with his disciples. What happened on the fortieth day? We should all like to go to Heaven, dear children, for Heaven is our true country; therefore, we should frequently think of Heaven, and live in such a way that Jesus will one day receive us into Heaven. That we may lead a life in this world like that of the holy angels in Heaven, we ought to beg God's grace frequently, and contemplate devoutly *His ascension into Heaven* during the recital of the second glorious mystery. What did Jesus promise to send to His disciples before He ascended into Heaven? When did the Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles? And where are we sanctified by the Holy Ghost? This grace which we receive in Holy Baptism we ought to preserve faithfully. Our heart should always

be pure and holy—a Temple of the Holy Ghost; only, how can we do this if we are all inclined to evil? By the grace from above which the Holy Ghost grants to us. In the third glorious mystery, therefore, we should contemplate *the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.*

Our holy faith teaches us that the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was from the first moment of her conception free from the least stain of sin, and, therefore, dear children, after her death she was glorified by God in an especial manner. As she had never committed a sin with her body it was not permitted to decompose, and as tradition tells us, after death the soul of the Blessed Virgin was united again to her body, and with body and soul she was taken up into Heaven.

The church celebrates the *Assumption* of Mary into Heaven as a great feast, and we should return thanks to God during the recitation of the fourth glorious mystery, for His goodness in rewarding virtue so gloriously.

What joy there must have been amongst the inhabitants of Heaven when Mary was taken up into Heaven! Because she had always been a faithful handmaiden of the Lord upon earth, and throughout her whole life had accomplished the will of God and promoted His glory, a special honor was reserved for her by God in Heaven. As a mark of her exalted dignity she was crowned with a diadem more brilliant than of gold and precious stones. We should contemplate devoutly in the fifth glorious mystery *the crowning of the Blessed Virgin in Heaven.*

These, dear children, are the five glorious mysteries of the holy rosary. They remind us of the glorious events which took place after the death of Jesus and His Most Blessed Mother. We will now repeat all the fifteen mysteries. The most remarkable events of the lives of Jesus and Mary could not be told more briefly, simply, or more beautifully than in the fifteen mysteries of the rosary. Prize and honor the rosary all through life as a present from the Mother of God. Say it often humbly and devoutly, and you will thereby please God as much as if you presented Him with a wreath of red, white and yellow roses.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

167. What are the five glorious mysteries which contain briefly the glorious events which took place after the death of Jesus?

I. The Resurrection.
II. The Ascension.
III. The Descent of the Holy Ghost.
IV. The Assumption.
V. The Crowning of the Blessed Virgin.

Instructions on First Confession.

I.

What is the Sacrament of Penance?

Question. What is the Sacrament of Penance?

Answer. Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.

Q. How does the Sacrament of Penance remit sin and restore to the soul the friendship of God?

A. The Sacrament of Penance remits sin and restores the friendship of God to the soul by means of the Absolution of the priest.

Dear Little Children: To-day's instruction is about the Sacrament of Penance. Much depends upon this instruction. Soon you will go to Confession, that is, receive the Sacrament of Penance. This is a great blessing for which you should be very grateful. If you receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily you will obtain many graces, so pay great attention to this and to the following instructions, that you may learn to receive worthily this great Sacrament with all its benefits.

All of you, my little ones, have already received the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. When one is baptized the Holy Ghost descends and sanctifies the soul. He gives to the soul the beautiful Robe of Innocence or sanctifying grace. A soul adorned with Sanctifying Grace is wonderfully beautiful, and God rejoices in it. Should one die in this state, the soul would be taken straight to Heaven. But, if after Baptism, one falls again into sin, the soul becomes stained, the Robe of Innocence becomes tarnished. Should one have committed grievous sin, sanctifying grace is lost. A soul without sanctifying grace is no longer beautiful, but hideous. God has no more pleasure in it, and at death it would be shut out eternally, that is, forever, from God's presence. Is there, then, no help for one who, after Baptism, has fallen into sin? Can he, perhaps, be baptized

again? Oh, no. Baptism can be received only once, but the loving Saviour, in His infinite mercy, has cared for those who after Baptism fall again into sin. For such He has instituted the Sacrament of Penance. In this Sacrament the sins committed after Baptism are remitted—that is, they are forgiven—removed from the soul. Who remits, that is, takes away the sins? The priest. The priest has received this power from God—he remits the sins in the name—in the place of God. Remember, then, the Holy Sacrament of Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven by the priest through the power of God. I will say it once more, and then see who can repeat it after me. (Let one child try; now another, and now all together.)

When a person is baptized, the Holy Ghost comes and sanctifies the soul. What robe does He give to the soul? How else can you call the Robe of Innocence? How does the soul appear when filled with sanctifying grace? How does God feel towards such a soul? Should the person die, whose soul possesses sanctifying grace, whither would the soul go? If, after Baptism, one falls into sin, what happens to the Robe of Innocence? If one commits grievous sins the Robe of Innocence is not only soiled, but worse happens, what, namely? How does a soul no longer appear which has lost sanctifying grace? How does it appear? What can God no longer take in such a soul?

If persons should die with their soul in such a state, what would happen? For how long a time? "Eternally." How else can you express it? What help is there for one who has fallen into sin after Baptism? Can one perhaps be baptized again? Why not? But the loving Saviour has also cared for such as these. What sacrament did He institute for them? What sins are remitted in this sacrament? "Sins are remitted." How else can you express it? Who remits sin? From whom has the priest received the power to remit sin? Therefore, we say, the priest remits sin in the name or in the place of God. One of you tell me again, what the Sacrament of Penance is.

II.

Institution of this Sacrament by Our Lord.

Q. How do you know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism?

A. I know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism, because Jesus Christ after His Resurrection appeared to His apostles and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whose sins you shall forgive,

they are forgiven them: Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." This power has descended from the apostles to the bishops and priests.

Jesus instituted the Holy Sacrament of Penance, but when? After His Resurrection, the same day on which Jesus arose from the dead, the apostles were gathered together in a large room—for fear of the Jews they had bolted the doors—but there stood Jesus suddenly in the midst of them. Therefore, we can say Jesus appeared to the apostles. He spoke, saying: "Peace be with you;" then he breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Oh, what a power the apostles received! They can forgive sins. Whose sins they shall forgive God will also forgive; but should they retain the sins God will also retain them. To forgive sin—this no creature could do by his own power. The apostles received this power from Jesus. The apostles are dead. Who has now the power to forgive sins? The bishops and priests. How do you know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism? I know that the priest has the power of absolving from sins committed after Baptism because Jesus Christ after His Resurrection appeared to His apostles and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; Whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." This power has descended from the apostles to the bishops and priests.

Who instituted the Holy Sacrament of Penance? When? Where were the apostles assembled on the evening of the day upon which Jesus arose from the dead? What had they done in fear of the Jews? Who stood suddenly in their midst? Jesus stood amongst the apostles. He allowed them to see Him. How else can you express it? Yes. He appeared in their midst, what did Jesus speak to them? What did He then do? What did He say to them? What power did the apostles then receive?

The apostles died. Who has now the power to forgive sins? From whom did they receive this power? To whom then did the power to forgive sins descend?

III.

Graces Received in this Sacrament.

Q. What graces are received through the Sacrament of Penance?

A. 1. The Sacrament of Penance remits sin together with the eternal punishment due to sin.
2. It sanctifies the soul.
3. It gives especial graces to live a virtuous life.

Now you can easily understand what great graces are received in the Sacrament of Penance. The Sacrament of Penance remits sins —it removes them from the soul—it makes them go away—disappear. In the Sacrament of Penance, my dear little children, God forgives you your sins; through God's almighty power, the priest, in His place, absolves you—that is, washes from your souls every stain of sin. They who commit grievous sins, that is, great sins, deserve everlasting punishment, and this eternal punishment is also remitted in the Sacrament of Penance. It is remitted—that is, taken away, together with the sin. If one of you pulls up a flower, *together* with the root, you know what it means. If you forget your pad, *together* with the pencil, you know what is meant by the word *together*.

Besides, the Sacrament of Penance sanctifies the soul—the Robe of Innocence becomes again white and beautiful. If lost, it is restored. This great Sacrament also gives especial graces, that is, helps to live a virtuous, good and pious life. The Holy Ghost gives us grace to keep the commandments of God, to avoid sin, to pray with fervor, to be obedient and patient. Let me see, then, dear little ones, that you understand:

1. That the Sacrament of Penance remits sins, together with the eternal punishment due them.
2. It sanctifies the soul.
3. It gives especial graces to live a virtuous life.

I will say it again. Now, one of you repeat it after me. The Sacrament of Penance bestows great graces. What is remitted in this Sacrament? In what other words could you express it? What does God do? One can also say sins are absolved in the Sacrament of Penance. Remitted, absolved, forgiven, all mean the same. Namely, that sins are taken away, washed away, cleansed away from the soul, through the power of God by means of the absolution of the priest. Now, is this quite clear to you? What else is remitted in the Sacrament of Penance together with sin? The Sacrament of Penance sanctifies the soul. When the Robe of Innocence has been soiled how does it become once more? Even should it have been quite lost, what would the Sacrament of Penance do? This Sacrament, we have said, also gives especial graces to live a virtuous life. What graces or helps are given by the Holy Ghost?

IV.

Conditions Necessary to Receive Worthily this Sacrament.

Q. How many things are necessary to receive worthily the Sacrament of Penance?

A. Five things are necessary:

1. Examination of conscience.
2. Contrition.
3. Firm resolution not to sin.
4. Confession.
5. Satisfaction.

Yes, the most precious, most wonderful graces are, as we have seen, given in this great Sacrament; but, mark well, little children, these graces are not given unless we do something on our part. We must act. God is ever ready with His saving grace, but we must merit it by doing our part—our little part—for how small is our part in comparison with the great part God does? We are asked to do so little, God does so much. But, dear little children, let us always try to do our part well. Now let us learn what our part is: those who wish to receive—and who would not wish it?—the great graces given in the Sacrament of Penance, must do five things:

1. We must examine our conscience.
2. We must have sorrow for our sins.
3. We must make a firm resolution never more to offend God.
4. We must confess our sins to the priest.
5. We must accept the penance which the priest gives us.

Or, expressed in shorter terms:

1. Examination of conscience.
2. Contrition—that means sorrow.
3. Firm resolve not to sin.
4. Confession.
5. Satisfaction.

Now remember these things well. One after another I will explain them.

V.

Examination of Conscience.

Question 1. What is the examination of conscience?

Answer. The examination of conscience is an earnest effort to re-

call to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

Q. 2. What should we do before beginning the examination of conscience?

A. Before beginning the examination of conscience we should pray to the Holy Ghost to give us light to know our sins and grace to detest them.

Q. 3. How can we make a good examination of conscience?

A. We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life.

The first of the five things belonging to our part, then, is Examination of Conscience. Let us see what this means. To examine our conscience is to recall to our minds the sins we have committed. Each of you in turn now say it after me. Now all together. Perhaps you do not all understand the meaning of the word examine. To examine means to look into—to seek after, to hunt for. For instance: a child goes to the woods to gather wild flowers. It loses the way—it is lost. In the evening it does not return home. The parents are anxious. They go to the woods—they seek everywhere for the lost child. They look behind every tree, every bush. We would say, then, that they look in the woods, or examine the woods for the lost child.

In the same manner, then, dear little ones, you must examine your conscience. You must hunt for your sins—find every hidden fault. But how should we begin the examination of conscience? We should pray to the Holy Ghost to give us light to know our sins. All of you say it. Why should you pray to the Holy Ghost? You should pray to Him—that is, ask Him—beg Him for His help that you may know your sins; for light, that you may see into your little hearts and find every hidden sin. For instance: if you drop a coin on the floor of your room at night you may search a long time and not find it. Why? Because the room is dark; but turn on the light and soon your coin is found. This the Holy Ghost will do for our conscience if we ask Him. He will turn on the light that we may find our sins. But this is not all we must ask of the Holy Ghost. We must also pray that we may be heartily sorry for our sins, confess them sincerely, and not again commit them. So before you begin your examination of conscience pray fervently, pray from your

little hearts, that the Holy Ghost may help you. If He help, all is well. Without His aid you will not succeed. You may pray to Him in the following words: "Come, oh Holy Ghost, enlighten my mind, that I may know my sins. Touch my heart that I may be heartily sorry for them, sincerely confess them, and truly become better. Amen." And also say an Our Father and a Hail Mary.

What is the first of the five things necessary? What do you mean by the examination of conscience? What must you recall—that is, bring to mind? How should you begin your examinations of conscience? When you are preparing to examine your conscience, what is the first thing you will do? What will you ask of the Holy Ghost? Will the Holy Ghost only help us to know our sins? What prayer can you say to the Holy Ghost? What prayers should you also say?

VI.

The Ten Commandments.

You will begin your examination of conscience then by prayer; next, you will think of the sins you have committed. This you will do by going over the ten commandments of God, the commandments of the Church and the seven deadly sins. In the ten commandments God has told us what we are to do and what we are not to do. If we do not obey God's commandments we sin. You all know the ten commandments of God, but we will go over them once more that you may the better remember and the better realize in how many ways you can break God's commandments.*

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT is: "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before me." We must believe then in the one true God, firmly hope in Him, love Him with our whole hearts, and fervently pray to Him. Under the first commandment give particular heed to prayer—morning prayer, evening prayer, prayers before and after meals. These are called daily prayers. If we neglect—that is, leave unsaid our daily prayers, we sin against

* The instructor cannot too carefully impress upon the children the many ways in which they can sin against each commandment. In a loving and earnest manner should be pointed out to them the justice and wisdom of God's commandments, the hideousness and ingratitude of sin. Their little hearts should be made to feel how the Sacred Heart of their Saviour is wounded by their sins, and also to fear the justice of an offended God.

the first commandment. To be distracted in prayer—that is, if while praying you are thinking of other things—your toys, your clothes, your amusements—is also a sin against this commandment. When you are praying your heart must be with God. What must God think of those little children who fall down on their knees, rattle off their prayers from mere habit, whilst their hearts are far from God and their thoughts occupied with amusements, toys, companions and other things? Oh, dear little children, do not insult God in this manner. Offer God the pure homage of your little hearts, talk to Him as to a loving parent, a loving friend. He is your Father; treat Him, then, as such. Tell Him all your little wants, your little sorrows, and keep your hearts and thoughts with Him while you pray. Neglecting to learn your catechism, not paying attention to your religious instructions are also sins, because you are not trying to learn what God wants you to know. By the first commandment, then, you are to examine yourselves, that is, ask yourselves, if you have neglected your prayers, if you have been distracted during prayer, that is, wilfully distracted, because if a thought of something else comes to your mind and you drive it away again, thus keeping your heart with God, and not allowing it to be tempted away, you do not sin. If you have neglected to learn your catechism or not paid attention to your religious instructions.

What is the first commandment? Under the first commandment to what are you to give particular attention? When should you pray? Morning prayer, evening prayer, prayers before and after meals, are called what? Yes, these are called daily prayers and must be daily said. We should often through the day lift up our hearts to God, and always in temptation, call to Him to help us. What must we avoid in prayer? About what must we not think? With whom must our hearts remain? What must you not neglect? To what must you give great attention? How then are you to examine yourselves, that is, what are you to ask yourselves under the first commandment?

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT is: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

We are commanded by the second commandment to speak with reverence of God and of the Saints, and of all holy things. Never use lightly, heedlessly, the holy name of Jesus, the word God, Saviour. There are other words also that must be spoken only with reverence; for instance: the words Heaven, Cross, Sacrament. In Heaven God has His throne; on the Cross the Saviour shed His divine blood for us; in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar He dwells

amongst us. Holy names are sometimes lightly spoken; for instance: "Oh, good Lord, how did it happen?" But they who use the word Lord or any holy names lightly, that is, irreverently, commit a sin against the second commandment. Still more serious is the sin if one makes use of a holy name to give vent to anger; this is called cursing. Under the second commandment, then, we are to ask ourselves if we have used the holy name of God, or any holy names, in a light manner; if we have used holy names to give vent to anger, or in any way sworn or used bad words.

What is the second commandment? We must not use the name of God in vain. What do you mean by that? Name some of the words we must not speak lightly. What do they commit, who use holy names in a light manner? Against which commandment? What is yet worse? How else can you express it? Against which commandment is it a sin? Now, one of you tell me how you should examine yourselves; that is, what questions you should ask yourselves on the second commandment?

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT is: "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day." Our Sabbath day is Sunday. Sunday is a day of rest. Sunday is a holy day—it is the Lord's Day. This day should be passed in a holy manner. We must hear Mass. They who, through their own fault, do not hear Mass, who miss Mass on Sunday, commit a sin. It may happen that a child is not well enough to go to Mass. This child misses Mass but commits no sin. It did not miss Mass through any fault of its own. One only commits a sin, therefore, when one purposely neglects to hear a Mass. It is also a sin if through one's own fault one is late for Mass. For instance: a child hears the church bells ring, but instead of heeding them, remains playing or idling; at last the child enters the church, but is much too late. The priest at the altar is already at the offertory. This child then is late through its own fault, and commits a sin. Do, my dear little ones, make it a special point to be always in time for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Be in your places when the priest comes to the foot of the Altar. Sundays you must go to Mass. And how must you behave in church? You must behave with the greatest reverence, for you are in the House of God. Pray fervently with hands folded and eyes turned toward the altar, where your Saviour is ever present. Never laugh, talk, look about or misbehave in church, for this is a sin and gives scandal to those who see it. How it must wound the Sacred Heart of

our loving Saviour to see the children He loves so well, behave in so thoughtless a way in His divine presence. How it must console Him when children reverently enter the church, kneel before the tabernacle where He dwells on earth, and whisper to Him the love of their little hearts. You must also remember that on holy days, that is, holy days of obligation, you must also hear Mass. Let us now see what we are to ask ourselves concerning the third commandment. We must ask ourselves, if through our own fault we have missed Mass on Sundays or holy days of obligation; if through our own fault we have been late for Mass; if in church we have behaved with irreverence or been inattentive.

What is the third commandment? Which is our Sabbath or day of rest? How should we spend Sunday? What must we hear? What do we commit if through our own fault we remain away from Mass? If, on account of sickness, we remain away, is it a sin? Why not? If through our own fault we are late for Mass, is it a sin? How must we behave in church? Whose house is the church? Is it a sin to laugh and talk in church? On what other days must we hear Mass?

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT is: "Honor thy father and thy mother." By the fourth commandment God tells us to honor, love and obey our parents. God has given us parents to care for us, and if we do not honor them we do not honor God, who has given them to us. It is not enough simply to say that you love your parents, for if you really love them from your hearts you will cheerfully and readily obey their every wish. A child that sulks and refuses to obey its parents, obeys them unwillingly, or gives them pert answers, sins against the fourth commandment, and will not receive God's blessing, but His punishment. The fourth commandment also obliges us to honor and obey our priests and teachers. God has placed them over you and He wishes you to honor them with your obedience. Also to the aged you must give respect; their age makes them worthy of your care and consideration. If you see an old man or an old woman, no matter how humble their station in life, always treat them with respect; be obliging, kind, gentle and polite to them; never laugh at nor be rude in your manner to them; remember that God commands you to treat the aged with every respect. In examining your conscience, then, on the fourth commandment you will ask yourselves if you have been disobedient or impertinent to your parents, priests or teachers; if you have wished

them any evil; if you have made fun of or been disobliging to old people.

What is the fourth commandment? Who commands us to love, honor and obey our parents? How does a child prove that it loves its parents? What does a child commit, if it disobeys its parents? Against what commandment does it sin? Whom else must we honor and obey? How must we treat old people? Now, all together repeat after me what you are to ask yourselves on the fourth commandment. Have we been disobedient or impertinent to our parents, priests or teachers? Have we wished them any evil? Have we made fun of or been disobliging to old people?

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT is: "Thou shalt not kill." To take life from any one would indeed be a dreadful crime, but there are many other ways of breaking this commandment. We sin against this commandment if we have in our hearts anger or hatred towards any one; if we wish them evil; if we wish they were dead. It is also a sin against this commandment if we quarrel or strike any one. If you strike others you may hurt their bodies. You can also hurt their souls by helping them to sin. If you persuade a little companion to tell a lie, to take something that belongs to another, you harm its soul by helping it to sin. For instance, if you say to a little companion: "In yonder garden there are some lovely flowers; let us go in and take some." And you both go and take the flowers that do not belong to you. Not only have you sinned by the sin of theft, but you have made your companion sin. You have harmed another's soul and so also have committed a sin against the fifth commandment. You must also be kind to animals. You should not tease or harm the animals that God has created. A child who takes pleasure in making animals suffer has a bad heart and cannot be pleasing in the sight of God. We sin then against the fifth commandment if we have been unkind to any one, quarreled with them or struck them; if we have wished them evil; if we have led others into sin; if we have been cruel to animals.

In other words, the fifth commandment forbids all wilful murder, fighting, anger, hatred, revenge and bad example. Do take this commandment to heart, dear little ones, remember the beautiful words of our Saviour: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Control your anger, be kind, unselfish and generous to all with whom you come in contact. Try so to live, that you may bring sunshine into the lives of others.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT is: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The sixth commandment forbids all immodesty with ourselves or others in looks, dress, words or actions. God cannot love immodest children. He wants a clean heart, a clean soul, one that is pure. Oh, how our dear Lord loves purity; that is, cleanness of heart! "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." A modest child never thinks a thought, listens to a word or commits an act of which it would be ashamed before its earthly parents or before its Heavenly Father. It shuns—that is, runs away from all companions who would teach it to do wrong. A modest child always remembers that God sees everything, knows everything that it thinks and does. Be pure, be clean, my dear little children. Say no naughty words, think no unclean thought. If a thought comes to you which you would be ashamed to tell, drive it from you. Say a little prayer to your Guardian Angel, who is ever watching over you, and ever ready to help you to be good. At night, when in your beds, fold your little hands and remember God is watching over you. Your little Angel will be all night by your side. Go to sleep with the sweet names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph on your lips.

Examine your consciences, then, my dear little children, on the sixth commandment, that is, ask yourselves if you have been immodest with yourselves or others in thought, word or action? If you have committed such a sin, be not ashamed to confess it. Tell it to the priest, ask God's pardon, tell Him how sorry you are, and make up your minds that you will not let it happen again.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT is: "Thou shalt not steal." The seventh commandment forbids all unjust taking or keeping what belongs to another. You cannot take what belongs to another without breaking the seventh commandment. Often children take things in secret that belong to their parents, trying to ease their conscience by thinking what belongs to their parents belongs to them. Remember, if without the knowledge of your parents you take sugar, fruit, candies, or anything else, you sin against the seventh commandment. A child who takes fruit from a neighbor's orchard; who takes pencils, pictures, penknives from its companions, also sins. It commits theft; that is, it steals; it is a thief. If you find something not belonging to you what must you do? You must return it to the owner, and if you do not know who lost it, you must

try hard to find out, and only when you can find no owner have you a right to keep what you have found. Sometimes a child borrows from a companion; that is, asks its companion to lend a pencil, a book or a knife. What one has thus borrowed one is bound to return. We are, therefore, forbidden by this commandment to take the smallest article that does not belong to us; neither can we destroy anything belonging to another. If intentionally you soil or tear clothes, books or anything belonging to another; if wilfully you destroy a neighbor's flower-bed, lawn or tree; if you break a window; you sin against the seventh commandment. On the seventh commandment, then, you must ask yourselves if you have taken anything—money, something to eat, any article at all belonging to your parents or others; if you have kept from the owner what you found or borrowed; if wilfully you have spoiled or broken anything that belonged to another.

What is the seventh commandment? What is forbidden by this commandment? What do you commit if you take anything from your parents or from others? Against which commandment do you sin? If you find anything what are you to do? If you have borrowed any article, what must you do? Is it also a sin to intentionally destroy anything belonging to another? Against which commandment? All together, say after me, what questions you are to ask yourselves on the seventh commandment? 1st, Did I take any change, something to eat, any article at all that belonged to my parents or others? 2nd, Did I return to the owner what I found or borrowed? 3rd, Have I intentionally spoiled or broken anything that belonged to another?

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT is: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." In this commandment you are forbidden to lie. The serpent in Paradise was the first to lie. It said to Eve: "If you eat of the forbidden fruit you will not die." The serpent knew what it said was untrue; that it was a lie; so God condemned the serpent ever after to crawl in the dust. They who lie are followers of the devil, and most displeasing to God. God hates a lie and a liar cannot be a child of God. On the eighth commandment, then, ask yourselves if you have been truthful. Anything that is not true is a lie, and, little children remember, a lie is a lie, and nothing can excuse or make an untruth anything else than a sin. Do not call any untruth you may tell, a trifle or a white lie, but remember an untruth in the sight of God is always sinful.

What is the eighth commandment? What is forbidden by this commandment? Who told the first lie? Whom does one follow if one lies? What must you ask yourselves on the eighth commandment?

Next come the NINTH and TENTH COMMANDMENTS, but you need not question yourselves on these two, as sins against these commandments are also sins, by thought or desire, under the Sixth and Seventh commandments.

VII.

The Commandments of the Church.

After the Ten Commandments of God follow the SIX COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH. You will not need to examine yourselves on all of them. You need only ask yourselves if you have eaten meat on days on which it is forbidden. You know that on certain days we are not allowed to eat meat. These days are called days of abstinence. One of these days is Friday each week, because our Saviour died for us on Good Friday. Ash Wednesday and the three last days of Holy Week, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are also days of Abstinence, on which we must not eat meat. By meat is also meant broth or any soup made from meat. Instead we are allowed to eat any kind of fish. There are some few other days, generally announced in church, on which meat is forbidden. You must also ask yourselves whether you have observed the Sixth commandment of the Church, which commands the support of Church and School. Have you given in church or school the pennies, or the money, received from your parents for that purpose, or have you kept this money, or spent it for candy or other things? This would be sinful.

What questions only need you ask yourselves on the commandments of the Church? What do you call those days on which you cannot eat meat? On which day each week can you not eat meat? But supposing you were sick on a Friday or a day of abstinence could you then eat meat? Yes, in case of sickness you are allowed soup or meat, anything that is necessary for your health.

VIII.

The Seven Capital or Deadly Sins.

Next we will go through the SEVEN CAPITAL or DEADLY SINS. These are—Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth. They are called capital sins because they are the sources from which so many other sins spring. The first of these is *Pride*. We sin through pride when we think too much of ourselves—think we are better than others; if we look down upon those who are poorer than ourselves, or are vain because we have fine clothes. If we cannot bear to be corrected or shown that we are in the wrong, it is also a sign that we are proud. Oh, dear little children, what have we to be proud of? God has given us everything that we have, and by Him, in one moment, all could be taken from us. God does not like pride. See how He punished Lucifer. God loves humility, which is the opposite virtue. The humble do not want to be praised, do not want the first place, but want to give all honor to God. The second capital sin is *Covetousness*. The covetous child wants everything for itself—it will not share its gifts with others. If it has been given a box of candy, and a little brother says: "Please give me some," "No," answers the covetous child, "the candy was given to me and you shall not have any;" or such a child has a new picture book; a brother or sister wants to look at the pictures, but quickly this covetous child shuts up the book and says, "The picture book is mine; no one else can look at it." The third of these sins is *Lust*, but this sin I have explained to you under the sixth commandment.

The fourth capital sin is *Envy*. The envious cannot bear to hear others praised, to see them happy, or to have them enjoy pretty things. You all know about Cain, and how angry he became because God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice. Be most careful, my dear children, not to be envious of your little companions; be happy in their pleasure and good fortune. The fifth capital sin is *Gluttony*. We sin through Gluttony when we eat or drink too much or too greedily. No matter how much we like a thing, we must not eat nor drink too much of it.

The sixth capital sin is *Anger*. Sometimes when a child cannot have its own way, it begins to cry and scream, stamps its feet and throws things on the floor. Such a child is angry. Every one

wants to go far away from such a child—it is so ugly. A child who becomes angry commits a sin. The seventh capital sin is *Sloth.* A child who does not want to work, does not want to learn its lessons, will not pay attention in school, who does not even wish to say its prayers; in other words, a child who is lazy commits this sin. Now, you can easily see what questions you must ask yourselves on these seven sins. Have you been proud, selfish, envious, greedy, angry, lazy?

After the commandments of the Church on what other sins must we question ourselves? Why are they called capital sins? Can one of you explain to me how you can sin through pride? What is another name for covetousness? Explain it. The third capital sin is lust; but this sin was explained and I trust deeply impressed upon your hearts under the sixth commandment. Can one of you give me an example of anger? Who will give me another name for gluttony? What does it mean? What does envy mean? Now, who can give me another name for sloth, and explain it? You must all learn the names of these seven capital sins.

IX.

Practical Instructions for the Examination of Conscience.

To examine your consciences, then, that is, to search for your sins, you must recall the ten commandments of God, the commandments of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the duties you are obliged to perform. By your duty is meant the work appointed for you to do. Perhaps your mother wants you to amuse baby for a little while, perhaps there are errands for you to do, then you have your lessons to study. These are your duties, and if you leave them undone you not only are disobedient, but you have left something undone that God meant for you to do. You have not done your duty. Remember also that you can sin in thought, word and action. To make it still easier for you to find your sins, in your little prayer-books you will find a list of sins on which you can question yourselves*. It is called the "Examination of Conscience."

*The instructor can just as well mention a list of sins to give the children a better idea of the sins they have committed. In fact, some of the best confessors much prefer this to putting a printed list into a penitent's hands. Should the children instructed have already once been to confession, they should be reminded they must first ask themselves, if they have performed the penance the priest gave them.

Though you may read it over as a help, remember there may be sins in the list that you have not committed, and, again, sins that are not given in the list you may have committed. For instance, in a list of sins the question may be asked: "Have you struck any one in anger?" Perhaps instead of ever striking any one you scratched or even bit them. Would this, then, be no sin because you did not find it in the list of sins? Of course, it is a sin just the same to hurt any one wilfully—it makes no difference whether you struck, scratched or how you hurt them—and a sin displeasing to God.

A few words more, my dear little children, on the examination of conscience. Do not wait until the last moment to examine your conscience. Go, often if you can, into the church, into God's presence, kneel reverently before the altar, and there speak to your loving Saviour in the tabernacle. Ask Him to help you; tell Him how much you want to be good; to make a good confession and wash your little souls in His precious blood. Prepare yourselves that, one day, you may, in Holy Communion, receive Him into your very hearts. Also ask the Holy Ghost to give you light to find all your sins, and ask the dear mother of God and your Guardian Angel to help you. Then try to remember your sins, or, at least, some of them, if you do not go to confession just then, but before you leave the church be sure to tell the dear Saviour how sorry you are and how hard you will try to be good. God, seeing your sincerity, will love and bless you, and find consolation for His Sacred Heart in His little children.

X.

Contrition.

Question 1. What is Contrition?

Answer. Contrition or sorrow for sin is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God.

Q. 2. What must Contrition include?

A. Contrition must include a firm purpose of amendment; that is, a firm resolution not to commit the sins again.

Q. 3. How can you excite sorrow or make an act of Contrition?

A. I am most heartily sorry, O my God, for all my sins, because

they displease Thee, and I firmly purpose by the help of Thy holy grace not to offend Thee more, but to amend my life and atone for my sins. Amen.

The second thing necessary on our part is *Contrition.* Contrition, or sorrow for sin, is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God. All may say it together. If we are sorry for our sins, our hearts are sad, heavy. We think to ourselves, oh, if only we had not sinned! We long to have our souls white and clean once more and regret from our hearts that we have offended our dear Saviour who has suffered and died for us.

In order to make Contrition yet more clear to you, I will tell you about St. Peter. When Jesus was taken by the soldiers on Mt. Olivet, St. Peter was anxious to know what was to be done to the Saviour, so he followed Him to the palace of the high priest, whither the soldiers led Him. In the outer court of the palace was a fire, around which the servants were gathered, as the weather was cold. St. Peter thought no one would know that he was one of Christ's apostles, so he joined the servants in order to hear what they would say of Jesus. One of the maids of the high priest said to Peter: "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." Alas, Peter was afraid to own his Master, so he denied it. Soon after another maid saw him and said to the others: "This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth." But Peter still denied that he knew Jesus. A little while after the servants, who stood about, said again to Peter: "Surely thou art one of them," meaning one of the apostles, but St. Peter, still being afraid, again denied Jesus, swearing he did not know Him. Oh! what pain it must have caused the dear Heart of the loving Saviour to have one of His apostles, whom He had loved so dearly, deny Him three times. How sadly He must have looked at Peter, as if to say, "Oh, Peter, what hast thou done?" Then St. Peter realized how he had sinned; how he had wounded the Sacred Heart of Jesus. What must his shame have been to think he had been so cowardly as three times to deny his Lord and Saviour? His heart was so filled with sorrow that he wept most bitter tears. Jesus, seeing his contrition, forgave him so entirely that He placed St. Peter at the head of His Church, and St. Peter later had the courage to give up his life for Jesus. God does not ask you to weep such

bitter tears for your sins, but He does ask you to have a true sorrow and hatred for them. You must be truly sorry; the sorrow must come from the bottom of your little hearts. It is not enough simply to say an act of contrition, or to read one from your prayer-book. God looks into your hearts; He knows if there is true sorrow in them. They who have no true sorrow will not be forgiven. So remember, children, that unless you are sorry for your sins, and truly mean to try to be good, your confession will be useless. You must understand now, from the very beginning of your preparation for confession, that merely telling your sins to a priest will not give you God's forgiveness. In order to receive Christ's pardon you must be sorry for your sins. Go to Jesus, then, little ones, with hearts full of sorrow for having offended Him and He will press you to His Sacred Heart and forgive you all.

What is the second thing necessary in order to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily? What is contrition? Why are our hearts sad? What do we long for? In order to explain contrition, of whom did I speak to you? Who can repeat all I told you about St. Peter? Why did St. Peter weep bitter tears? What does God ask of you? Is it enough to say an act of contrition, or to read one from your prayer-book? Where does God look? If you are not heartily sorry for your sins, what will you not receive?

No sorrow, no forgiveness! You must then awaken, excite contrition in your hearts. How can you do this? You can open your prayer-books and fervently and attentively read some of the prayers given for the preparation for confession, but it is better to excite sorrow in your hearts, if you can, without opening your prayer-books. Think first how God has shown His hatred of sin. See how He punished the bad angels. One sin of pride, of rebellion, and they were cast into hell. Again, see how God punished Adam and Eve. One sin of disobedience and they were sent out from Paradise—out of God's holy presence. Thank God for His mercy to you. Say to Him: "O, Almighty God, my heavenly Father, how hateful is sin in Thy sight! The bad angels were cast into hell, Adam and Eve were driven from Paradise; I also have sinned, and if Thou didst punish me according to Thy divine justice, what severe punishment would I deserve! But, Heavenly Father, I trust in Thy great mercy. I am most heartily sorry for all my sins because they have displeased Thee. It

grieves me to think that I have disobeyed Thee. Oh, forgive me all my sins, be merciful to me for Jesus' sake, and from now on I shall try hard to do Thy will, and not to again offend Thee."

A child who thinks and prays thus has contrition, but that the sorrow may be still deeper, still more perfect, kneel before Jesus in the tabernacle or before a crucifix and think how much Jesus has loved and still loves you. Jesus was ever filled with love for mankind. He healed the sick, He consoled the sorrowful, He blessed the little children. But the greatest love Jesus showed us when He died for us. Oh, think what Jesus suffered for love of us! On the Mount of Olives in His agony He shed blood from every pore. He was scourged, was crowned with cruel thorns that were driven into His sacred brow. Weak from the loss of blood, He fell beneath the weight of His heavy cross and for love of each one of you. Think of this and awaken sorrow in your hearts. See Him looking down so tenderly upon you and listen to Him as He says: "See what I have done for thee, my child. Why dost thou not love me? Why dost thou displease me?" Answer Him then and say: "My Jesus, I do love Thee with my whole heart. For love of Thee, I am sorry for all my sins. Forgive them, my Saviour, and I will try to not again displease Thee. I shall try always to remember how much Thou didst suffer for love of me." After having prayed in this manner, open your prayer-books and read fervently and attentively the Act of Contrition.

Let us go over once more what I have said. I said not to open your prayer-books right away, but first to try and awaken sorrow in your hearts by thinking of what? Where do we find an example of God's hatred of sin? Give me another example of how God punished sin? That your sorrow be still more perfect, on what must you meditate, that is, think? Jesus has always loved us. How did He show His greatest love for us? After having excited sorrow in your hearts, what should you do?

XI.

Amendment.

The third thing on our part is *Amendment*. Amendment? What does that mean? For instance, a child has neglected to study a

lesson or to write an exercise; the teacher is displeased, the child is punished. The child says to itself, "Another time I will not neglect my lesson; I will not be lazy." We can say the child has made a resolution; that is, has made up its mind to study its lessons—not to be lazy again. We could also say the child has a firm purpose of amendment, or it is going to amend its ways. We might almost say mend its ways. If we are going to mend a thing, we are going to make it good again, are we not? If you mend a book, or toy, you try to make good the place where it was spoiled, torn or broken, do you not? Well, then, dear little children, you are going to mend your lives; that is, you are going to try to make them good lives; you are going to try not to sin again; not to displease your dear Saviour any more. We must then have a firm purpose of amendment; a firm resolution not to sin again. We must make up our minds. We must *will* to be better. If a child makes up its mind, to study its lessons, what means that child to do? (Study.) If a child makes up its mind, to obey its parents, what will that child do? (Obey its parents.) Remember also that the amendment, the resolution, must be *firm;* that is, it must be strong, it must be kept. We must not have just a little desire, a little will to do just what we say, but we must earnestly mean it. A child is awakened in the morning. It says: "Yes, I will get right up," but does not get right up; it turns over and goes to sleep again. This child has not the earnest intention, the firm will to get up. We cannot act in this way when we are going to receive the Sacrament of Penance. We must make a firm resolution to do better, otherwise we would not have true sorrow. If you have offended your mother and have made her unhappy, when you tell her you are sorry, do you not promise her that you will not again do the thing that displeased her? So must it be with God. If we are truly sorry for our sins we must firmly make up our minds not to commit them again. Contrition must include a firm purpose of amendment.

What is the third thing necessary on our part called? Who will give me an example of amendment? What other word can we use for amendment? When we receive the Sacrament of Penance, what resolution must we make? We can also say we make up our minds or have the will to be better. Give me an example. Need you only desire it, or will it a *little?* No, the desire, the will, must be what? (*Firm.*) Can we be sorry for a sin, without making up our minds not to commit it again? Contrition then must include what? All together tell me, what must contrition include?

In your catechism you will find a prayer in which contrition and amendment are joined. It is called an Act of Contrition. An Act of Contrition is simply a telling God that you are sorry for having displeased Him. You must all know how to make an Act of Contrition, because when you have done wrong you should at once tell God that you are sorry. Also when saying your prayers at night you should examine your conscience; that is, stop and think what wrong things you have done during the day, and then make an Act of Contrition, telling God how sorry you are and that you are going to try to be good. It need not be a long prayer. You can say it in your own words, for instance:

"O, my God, I am very sorry that I have offended Thee. Forgive me and with Thy help I will not sin again." Simply saying you are sorry, and that you are going to be good is an act of contrition. The Act of Contrition in the Catechism is longer. We will go over it together. "I am heartily sorry, O my God, for all my sins, because they displease Thee, and I firmly purpose by the help of Thy holy grace, not to offend Thee more; but to amend my life and atone for my sins, Amen." Let us stop and think of these words: "I am heartily sorry for all my sins because they displease God." Every time we sin, we displease God, we disobey Him, we go against Him. Just think of displeasing God, who deserves only love from us. He is our Father, Who has always loved us and cared for us.

Then the prayer goes on to include Amendment:

"And I firmly purpose by the help of Thy holy grace, not to offend Thee more, but to amend my life and atone for my sins. Amen."

XII.

Confession.

Question 1. What is Confession?

Answer. Confession is the humble telling of our sins to a priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

Q. 2. With what prayer does one begin their Confession?

A. With the Confiteor.

In order not to keep others waiting longer than necessary, and to take less of the priest's time, it is better to say this prayer before entering the Confessional. Before going into the Con-

fessional to tell your sins, you should reverently kneel and say the prayer called the Confiteor, which is as follows: "I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the Saints and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;" then, having thought of all your sins and filled your hearts with sorrow for them, you enter the confessional and humbly kneel before the priest, make the sign of the cross and say, "Father, bless me, for I have sinned." Then say, "This is my first confession," (In your following confessions you will say: "Since my last confession it has been"——, mentioning the time, a week, a month, however long it may have been,) and I accuse myself of the following sins—

Q. 3. With what prayer do you end your confession?

A. After having told all the sins you can remember, you say: "For these, and all the sins of my past life, and all the sins I may have forgotten, I am most heartily sorry and ask pardon of God and absolution of you, father."

We have now come to the fourth thing necessary on our part, namely, Confession. Confession is the humble telling of our sins to a priest for the purposes of obtaining forgiveness. All together tell me what confession is. We must make known; that is, tell our sins to the priest, that we may obtain his absolution. The priest to whom you tell, that is, confess your sins, is called your confessor. You must open your little hearts to him and tell him everything. When you have done wrong do you not go with confidence to your mother and tell her your faults and all your little troubles? Go in the same manner with loving confidence to the priest—he is your friend; he loves little children and longs to bring them to God. You know already that there is a difference in sins; that there are two kinds—mortal sins and venial sins. For instance, you are impatient because something has disappointed you, or you are selfish and unkind to a little companion. These are lesser sins, called venial sins, a word which means easily pardoned. Though small sins, they are displeasing to God, who hates the smallest sin; then, too, they leave stains upon the soul. Suppose one wilfully breaks God's command-

ments by stealing a considerable sum of money; by not keeping holy the Lord's day; by injuring another seriously, through dishonesty; by being immodest. These would be grievous sins, called mortal sins, a word which means deadly, because mortal sins kill the soul by taking away sanctifying grace—the life of the soul. Dear little children, you must hate and avoid every sin, whether venial or mortal, as the greatest evil on earth. You must try to lead sinless lives. Beg God every day to keep you from sin. Always remember what your loving Saviour suffered for sin. Though we are only obliged to tell our mortal sins in confession, it is better to tell every sin, every wrong thing we have done. Neither is it always easy for us to know whether a sin is mortal or venial. By omitting to confess a mortal sin we would be adding a new and greater sin and would also fail to obtain forgiveness. Remember, then, to tell every sin. If you hide a single mortal sin, that is, if through shame you omit the sin in confession, you tell a lie to the Holy Ghost. None of your sins are then forgiven and you have a new and dreadful sin upon your soul. Should a sin be forgotten unintentionally, you need not be troubled, but tell it in your next confession. We must also tell the number of times we have committed each particular mortal sin: that is, if we have committed a sin once, twice, three times.

What is the fourth thing necessary on our part? What is Confession? What name is given to the priest to whom you confess your sins? Is there a difference in sins? What are grievous sins called? What are lesser sins called? Some one please try to explain the difference. What sins are we obliged to tell in confession? Is it not better to tell every little sin? What happens if we conceal, that is, hide a grievous sin in confession? Is it enough just to name our sins, for instance to say: I was disobedient? No,—we must also tell the number of times we have committed each particular sin; for instance, I disobeyed once,—I disobeyed three times. We must also tell the circumstances that would change them without disguise or excuse. We should tell our sins just as they appear to us, telling them in such a way that the priest may clearly see the state of our conscience. We must also take great care not to mention the names of others or in any way blame them for our sins.

Children, think what you are about to do. You are about to receive the holy Sacrament of Penance. O, pray, therefore, with all earnestness for God's help and do all in your power to make your confessions worthy. Be most sincere, most honest, most open. Tell the priest everything. No matter how hard it may

be to tell a sin, no matter how ashamed you may feel, tell everything. Never, never commit the awful mistake of hiding any sin in confession. The priest, my dear little children, is bound to secrecy—what is told to him in confession he must keep secret. A priest can never make known anything that has been told to him in confession, even to save himself from torture and death. We speak of the seal of the confessional. Have you ever seen any one closing a letter he wished to fasten securely? He takes sealing wax, softens it by heating, and with it seals the envelope. So it is with what one confesses to the priest, it is secured as by a seal within his heart. Perhaps a poor little one who knows the priest very well may say: "The priest won't like me any more if I confess to him all the bad things I have done." My dear little child, the priest must not even remember the sins you tell him. Besides, it is a great consolation to a priest when a child tells everything openly, frankly, not trying to shield itself or hide the slightest fault. He will admire the courage of such a child and think: This child is sincere; this child is in earnest; this child is truly sorry. Do you not know how it is with your parents? If you try to hide from them the wrong you have done, how badly they feel, how unhappy you make them; but if you go to them, no matter how hard it may be for you, and tell them what you have done and how sorry you are, they almost forget the wrong in their joy to find that you are open, honest. Be honest, then, my children, with God, trust in His love, in His infinite mercy; go to His priest, tell everything openly and receive the priest's absolution. What if it does cost you something! What if you do have to overcome a feeling of shame when you tell your sins to the priest! Oh! what a small price for the great reward you receive! All the sins are washed from your souls by Christ's precious blood, as the priest gives you absolution. Your Saviour has forgiven you and clasped you once more to His Sacred Heart. How happy you will feel and how light your hearts will be when you come out from the confessional! Suppose a child has concealed a serious sin in confession, how will such a child feel when it returns from the confessional? Such a child has lied to the Holy Ghost, and has deceived the priest. Not one of its sins has been remitted, but instead to the old sins has been added a new and dreadful sin. How burdened the heart of such a child will be! There can be no consolation, no peace for such a child.

If we have left untold a grievous sin in confession, because we were ashamed to confess it, or because we neglected to examine our conscience: our confession was a bad one, and we have committed a new and very grievous sin. In our next confession we will have to acknowledge that in our last confession we wilfully omitted such and such a sin, naming it, and then also repeat all the sins told in our last confession. Why are we obliged to repeat the sin already told? Because the last confession (in which we omitted a grievous sin) was worthless—not a single sin was remitted. We did not obtain the priest's absolution or God's forgiveness for our sins. Why? Because our confession was not an honest one.*

It can also happen that a child may forget to tell a grievous sin in confession. The child examined its conscience carefully and sincerely intended to tell all its sins, but after confession, on the way home, perhaps a sin comes to the child's mind that it had forgotten to confess. What is to be done? Should this happen to any of you, you need not be troubled. God never punishes us for what is not our fault. Such a confession is good, because the sin was only forgotten, not wilfully withheld. It is only necessary to mention the forgotten sin in the next confession, saying, "I forgot such and such a sin, naming it, in my last confession." The other sins do not have to be repeated.

What kind of a confession do you make, if you *purposely* omit a sin? What do you commit? What will you be obliged to do in your next confession? Besides acknowledging that you wilfully omitted a sin and confessing it, what else must you do? Why must you repeat the sins already told in your last confession? Should a child forget a grievous sin in confession that it had sincerely meant to confess, what kind of a confession has the child made? What must be done in the next confession? What about the other sins confessed? Why do they not have to be repeated?

Before you confess your sins you say the Confiteor: "I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the

* It might be said that the foregoing does not seem so necessary to the instructions for the first confessions. However, if the child is taught from the beginning, the uselessness as well as the sinfulness, of concealing a grievous sin in the confessional—as the sin would have to be told in the next confession, the impressions made for frankness and honesty would be stronger. Certainly, one could not begin too early to impress on the child's mind this most important point of being honest and sincere in the confessional.

Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the Saints and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault." As I have told you before, it is better to say this prayer just before entering the confessional. When you enter the confessional, reverently kneel, make the sign of the cross and say to the priest: "Bless me, father, for I have sinned." Then say, "This is my first confession" (in your following confessions you must say, "Since my last confession—it has been a week, two weeks, a month"—whatever the time has been) "and I accuse myself of ————." Here tell the sins, their number and all the circumstances that might change their nature, being most careful not to mention any name in the confessional nor to put blame on any one else. After you have told all your sins, finish your confession by saying the following prayer: "For these and all the sins of my past life, and all the sins I may have forgotten, I am most heartily sorry and ask pardon of God, and absolution of you, father."

These prayers you must all learn to-day perfectly. I shall ask each child to say them in our next lesson.

XIII.

Satisfaction.

Question. What is satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance?
Answer. Satisfaction is: doing the penance given by the confessor.

The fifth thing necessary to worthily receive the Sacrament of Penance is satisfaction. Satisfaction is doing the penance given by the confessor. Now, all tell me what satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance is? Every one who confesses his sins to the priest is called a penitent, and to each penitent the priest gives a penance. The priest gives us a penance after confession that we may satisfy God for our sins. The confessor may say, for instance: For your penance say three Our Fathers, or, for your penance say five Hail Marys. Whatever prayers our confessor gives us for a penance we must say exactly and as soon after con-

fession as possible. If we do not say the penance our confessor gives us, we commit a sin. What a light penance the priest imposes upon us! Oh! think what a heavy, heavy penance our Saviour took upon Himself for our sins. With His precious blood He atoned for them. Certainly, then, we should most carefully fulfill the little penance our confessor gives us. If we do not do penance for our sins here on earth we will hereafter have to do penance in purgatory. I also advise you, dear children, to sometimes voluntarily take penances upon yourselves. For instance, if your father or mother request of you something that seems hard to do, do it willingly. Offer it up as a little penance for your sins. If you would like to lie in bed a little longer, say: "No, I will get right up as a penance for my sins." If something hurts you, if you are disappointed, bear it patiently as a penance for your sins.

What is the fifth thing necessary for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance? What is satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance? What does the priest impose upon us after confession? What do we commit if we do not say the penance given us? How can you voluntarily, that is, of your own will, take penance upon yourselves?

XIV.

On the Manner of Making a Good Confession.

I have explained to you the five things necessary on your part in order to receive worthily the Sacrament of Penance; but that you may make no mistake I shall enter into a few more explanations.

First I shall ask again: How many things are necessary on our part to make a good confession? What is the first thing? What do you mean by examination of conscience? What must you do before examining your conscience? Do not forget this: You must first pray to the Holy Ghost that He may give you light to know your sins. You can make use of the prayer you learned, or pray in your own words. If in church pray also to Jesus in the Tabernacle of the Altar. You are so near to Him there and He will not refuse you anything you may ask from your

hearts. Pray also to the Blessed Mother, who so loves to help little children to come to Jesus, and to your little Guardian Angels, who so rejoice when you are pleasing God. After praying for help you must examine your conscience. In order to make a good examination you must recall the commandments of God, the precepts of the church, the seven capital sins and your particular duties.

In order to make your examination easier the first time, you may use the list of sins given in your prayer-books. The first question* would be: Have I neglected to say my daily prayers? Here you must stop and think.** If you find you have sometimes forgotten or neglected to say them, then there is one sin you are to tell; also the number of times, as well as you can remember, that you have neglected them. If you find you have never neglected to say them, then so far you have found no sin. The next question is: Have I been wilfully distracted in prayer? Now think again. If you find that you have laughed or thought of other things while praying, then you have another sin to remember. You must say: "I have been distracted in my prayers," and also tell the number of times. If you have always prayed with attention, then you can pass this question by. The next question is: Have I neglected to learn my catechism? Here think again. If you find you have neglected to learn it, another sin to remember; if you have not neglected it, then you have nothing to accuse yourself of in answer to this question. Then you take up the second commandment and question yourself concerning it; so on through all the other questions in the list of sins. The sins you find you have committed you are to remember; if you have not committed them pass them by. Many of the sins given in the list you may not have committed, and again you have committed sins which are not named in the list. These also you must remember and confess.

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* Should any of the children, under instruction, have already been once to confession they must be reminded that the first question they ask themselves be if they have said the penance given them.

** This method is employed in order to teach children to tell the number of their sins. It should be explained to them that they are *obliged* to tell the number of grievous sins, not however of venial sins. But that, if they accustom themselves to tell the number of even venial sins, they will certainly not omit the number of mortal sins.

I have already advised you, my dear little ones, not to wait until the day of your confession to examine your consciences. If you have not already begun, then begin to-day, and each day go over some of the commandments and find what sins you have committed. Always ask first for the help of the Holy Ghost. After your examination of conscience comes contrition and amendment. You must be heartily sorry for the sins you find you have committed and make up your minds not to commit them again. My dear little ones, see to it that you are truly sorry, for without sorrow nothing else is of any avail. I have already told you how to fill your hearts with sorrow by thinking of your dear Saviour and all His sufferings for love of you. Though you deserve God's punishment, He in His mercy is about to forgive you all. Beg, then, for His forgiveness, tell Him how heartily you repent of your sins and fervently say your act of contrition. When you are in the church waiting for your turn to enter the confessional, behave with the greatest reverence. Above all, do not laugh or whisper to your neighbor. Remember, you are to think only of preparing yourselves for the great Sacrament you are to receive. After contrition and amendment comes the fourth thing necessary, namely, confession. When you are ready to confess your sins you enter the confessional. Have you ever seen a confessional? In the center sits the priest and on either side, that is, to the right and left of him, the penitents enter. Only one at a time goes in at either side. When one comes out another goes in. In the confessional is a little grating covered by a slide. When the priest is ready to hear your confession he will draw aside the slide, and then kneeling you turn towards the grating, make the sign of the cross and say: "Bless me, father, for I have sinned." The priest, making the sign of the cross over you, gives you his blessing in the following words: "May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips that thou mayest truly and humbly confess thy sins." If it is your first confession you say so; if not, you say since my last confession, it has been a week, a month, or whatever the time has been, then humbly and most truthfully tell all your sins just as they appear to you; tell them simply and clearly, concealing nothing. In the confessional you must speak in low tones; that is, you must not speak loud, for no one but the priest must hear your sins. (When waiting your turn outside of the Confessional you must be very careful not to go near enough to hear what is being

said in the confessional. If by accident you should overhear what is said by another you must try to forget it and be most careful not to repeat it, as that would be a great sin). After having confessed your sins you say the little prayer: "For these sins, all the sins of my past life and those I may have forgotten I am most heartily sorry and ask pardon of God and absolution of you, father." When the priest gives you absolution, he uses the power which God has given him and absolves you from your sins; that is, he forgives you in God's name and takes from your soul the stain of sin. Think what a wonderful gift of God this is! While the priest says the words of absolution the precious blood of Jesus is washing away your sins. At this time then, that is, at the time you are receiving absolution, most fervently, most piously, most heartily renew your Act of Contrition: "I am most heartily sorry, oh, my God, for all my sins, because they displease Thee, and I firmly purpose by the help of Thy holy grace not to offend Thee more, but to amend my life and atone for my sins. Amen." Should the priest give you some words of advice, some pious instruction, pay great attention, and any question he asks you, you must take great care to answer correctly. If a question is asked that you do not know, frankly say: "I do not know." Be also most careful to understand the penance your confessor gives you. If you do not understand, tell him so; should he give you a prayer you do not know, tell him that you do not know it. Never leave the confessional without being quite sure about your penance. Before you leave the confessional the priest says to you: "Go in peace." Whenever it is possible for you to do so, before leaving the church kneel near the altar, thank God for the great grace you have received; that is, for having washed away your sins in the Sacrament of Penance. Tell Jesus in your own words how much you thank Him for His merciful forgiveness. You can also open your prayer-book and read the Act of Thanksgiving, found after Confession. After thanking God you must say the penance your confessor gave you. Sometimes it happens that the priest gives certain prayers to be said on the day of confession and certain ones to be said on the following day. For instance he may say to you: "For your penance say three Our Fathers to-day and three Our Fathers to-morrow." Should this be the case, remember that it would not do to say six Our Fathers at once, but you must do exactly as the priest told you; say three Our Fathers on the day

of your confession and three more on the day following. When you have said your penance, if you wish, you may spend some time longer in prayer, or you may return home. Leave the church quietly and reverently. Be very careful to keep the promises you have made to God; prove by your actions that you are in earnest to amend your life. Be obedient to your parents, kind and gentle with your brothers and sisters, your companions and to all who are around you.

Why should you speak in low tones in the confessional? If you are waiting outside the confessional for your turn to go in, what must you be very careful to avoid? If, by accident you should overhear anything said by another in the confessional, what must you do? What would you commit should you repeat what you had overheard? What prayer must you say before entering the confessional? What do you ask of the priest before beginning your confession? What do you say after having mentioned all the sins you can remember? What prayer do you say while the priest is giving you absolution? To what must you pay great attention? How must you answer your confessor's questions? If you do not understand your penance, what must you do? If you do not know the penance that your confessor has given you, after having left the confessional, what are you to do? For what mercy must you give thanks to God? After having thanked God for the great grace bestowed upon you, what must you do? When you are ready to return home, how must you leave the church? How should you behave to your parents and to all with whom you come in contact?

Now, if there should be anything at all that one of you does not understand, ask that it may be explained to you. Remember that the priest will always gladly help those who sincerely ask for aid in making a good confession.

Particular attention and help should be given to those who are the least apt to obtain help from their parents or guardians. One should also see that each child is provided with a suitable prayer-book, in which can be found the prayers before and after confession. The children should be told to take these prayer-books with them to the church when they go to confession. It is also advisable to take the children to the church or chapel where they are to make their confession, and show them how they are to take their places—the way they should take turns in entering the confessional. Great care should be taken to impress upon the children by word and example with what reverence they should always behave while in the church.

XV.

An Examination of Conscience.

The First Commandment.—Have I neglected my daily prayers? Have I been wilfully distracted during prayer? Have I neglected to learn my catechism? Have I been inattentive during religious instructions?

The Second Commandment.—Have I used the name of God, the names of the Saints or of anything holy irreverently? Have I used holy names to give vent to anger? Have I cursed or used any bad words?

The Third Commandment.—Have I wilfully missed Mass on Sunday or on a Holyday of obligation? Have I, through my own fault, been late to Mass? Have I been inattentive at Mass? Have I laughed, talked or behaved irreverently in church?

The Fourth Commandment.—Have I been disobedient to my parents, teachers or superiors? Have I been sulky or impertinent to them? Have I wished any evil to them? Have I made fun of or been disobliging to old people?

The Fifth Commandment.—Have I been unkind to any one, quarreled with them or struck them? Have I led others into sin? Have I been cruel to animals?

Sixth and Ninth Commandments.—Have I been immodest with myself or others in thought, word, looks or actions?

Seventh and Tenth Commandments.—Have I taken money, eatables, anything at all belonging to my parents or others? Have I kept from its owner what I found or borrowed? Have I wilfully spoiled or broken anything belonging to another?

The Eighth Commandment.—Have I told a lie or in any way deceived?

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

Have I eaten meat on forbidden days?

Have I accepted without complaint the food put before me on days of fasting and abstinence?

Have I contributed in church and school?

THE SEVEN CAPITAL SINS.

Have I been proud?
Have I been covetous or selfish?
Have I been angry?
Have I been greedy?
Have I been envious?
Have I been lazy?

NOTE.

If you remember having committed any sin not given in this list you must nevertheless confess it.

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First religious instructions
for little ones

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